



JAMES PATTERSON
MAXIMUM
RIDE



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MAXIMUM
RIDE

WHAT CAME BEFORE

Max and her flock are genetic experiments. Created by a mysterious lab known only as the "School," their genetic codes have been spliced with avian DNA, giving them wings and the power to soar. What they lack are homes, families, and memories of a real life.

After escaping from the School, the flock is hunted by Erasers, agents of the School who can transform into terrifying wolf creatures, and Jeb Batchelder, the man they once thought of as a father. Despite their targets on their backs, the flock is desperate to learn about their individual pasts, and their inquiries lead them to Washington, D.C., where they meet Special Agent Anne Walker of the FBI, who takes them in and gives the flock a taste of a normal life — only to betray them in the end.

On their own again, the flock heads to Florida, following a lead on a multi-national corporation called ITEX that seems to have been pulling the flock's strings all along. Once there, Max is kidnapped by ITEX and replaced by a clone of herself — Max 2.0! With a bit of unexpected help from Jeb, Max escapes ITEX and rescues the flock from her doppelgänger.

Heading west, the kids find that ITEX has gone troublingly quiet and decide that a very public appearance is in order to try to draw them out. Unfortunately for the flock, their plan is a bit too successful, as they have their first encounter with the company's new and improved mechanical Erasers. Where it all goes truly wrong, however, is when one of their own switches sides... Who would have expected Angel to turn on the others in an effort to secure her survival in the world that remains after ITEX reduces the world's population by half?

As Max and the flock await extermination, will Angel turn out to be their executioner...or their salvation?

CHARACTER INTRODUCTION



MAXIMUM RIDE

Max is the eldest member of the flock, and the responsibility of caring for her comrades has fallen to her. Tough and uncompromising, she's willing to put everything on the line to protect her "family."



FANG

Only slightly younger than Max, Fang is one of the elder members of the flock. Cool and reliable, Fang is Max's rock. He may be the strongest of them all, but most of the time it is hard to figure out what is on his mind.



IGGY

Being blind doesn't mean that Iggy is helpless. He has not only an incredible sense of hearing, but also a particular knack (and fondness) for explosives.



NUDGE

Motermouth Nudge would probably spend most days at the mall if not for her pesky mutant-bird-girl-being-hunted-by-wolf-men problem.

MAXIMUM RIDE

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GASMAN

The name pretty much says it all. The Gasman (or Gazzy) has the art of flatulence down to a science. He's also Angel's biological big brother.



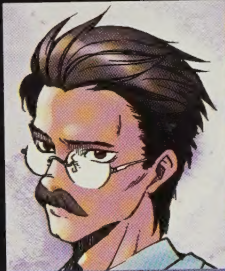
ANGEL

The youngest member of the flock and Gazzy's little sister, Angel seems to have some peculiar abilities — mind reading, for example.



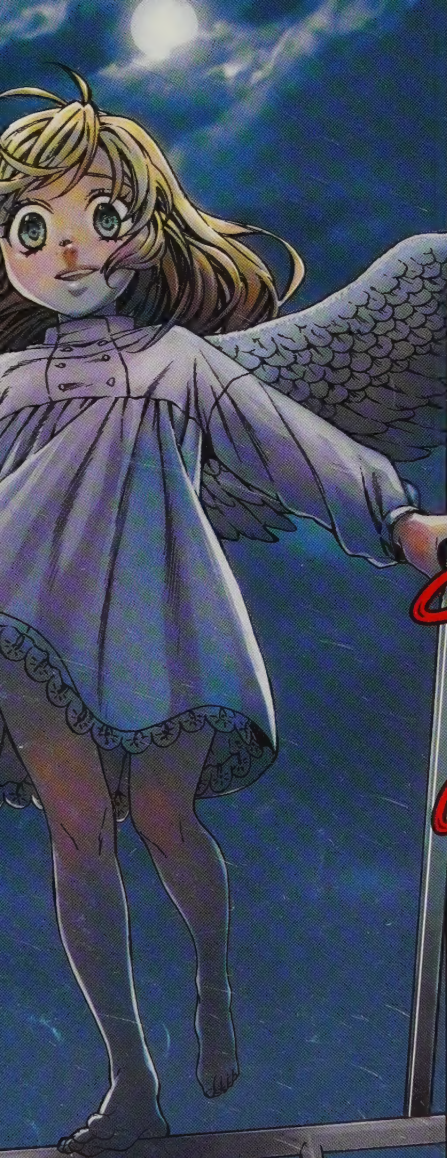
ARI

Just seven years old, Ari is Jeb's son but was transformed into an Eraser. He appears to have a particular axe to grind with Max.

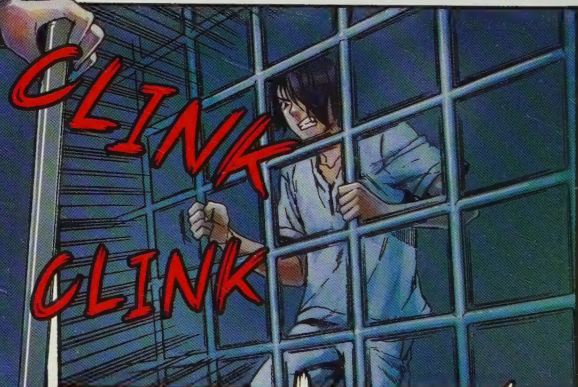


**JEB
BATCHELDER**

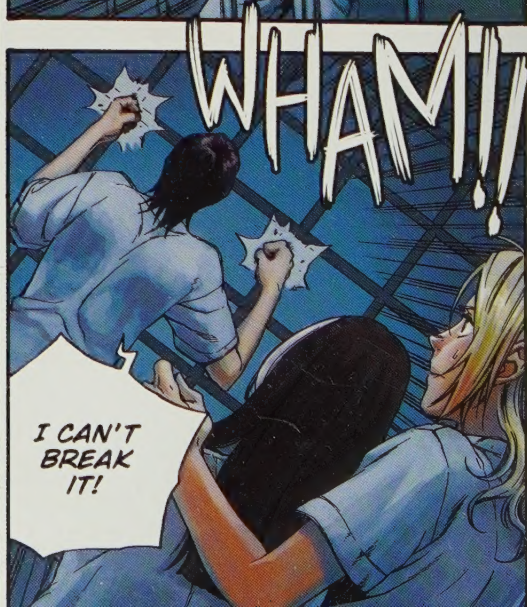
The flock's former benefactor, Jeb was a scientist at the School before helping the flock to make their original escape.



ANGEL!!



CLINK
CLINK



WHAM!!

I CAN'T
BREAK
IT!

MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 35



BUT I
CAN!

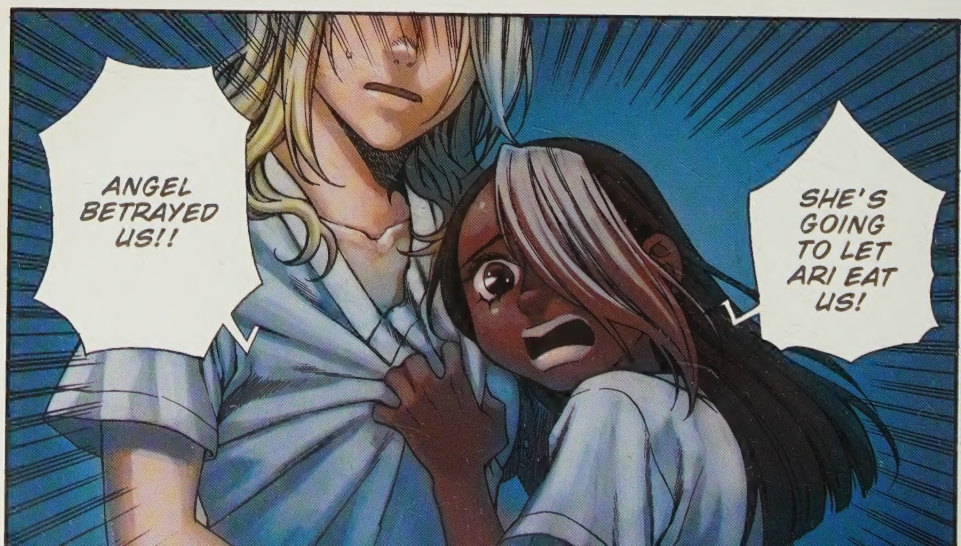
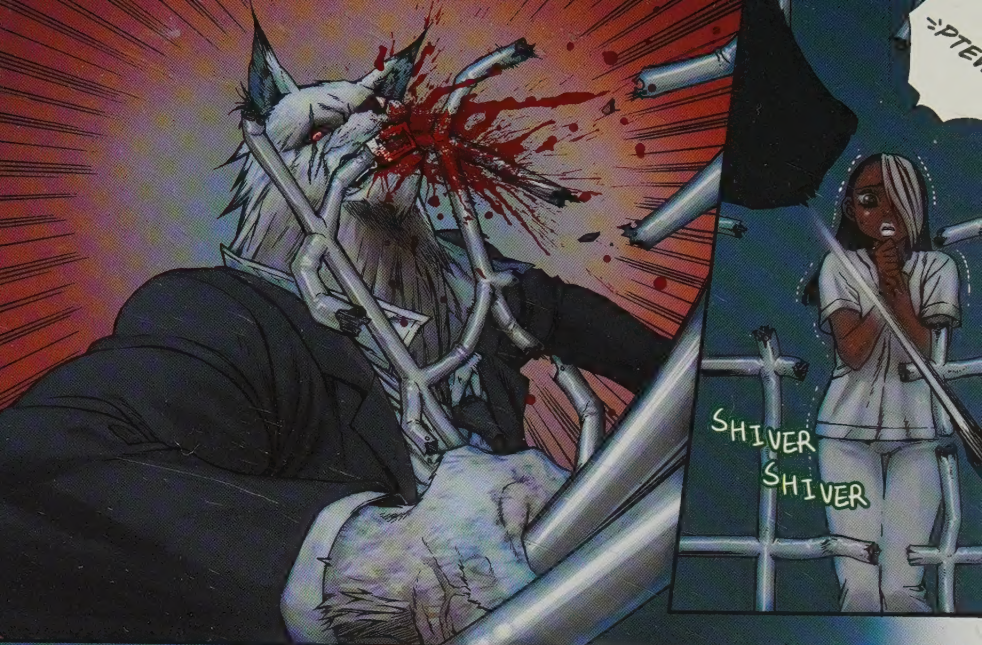
ARI?!

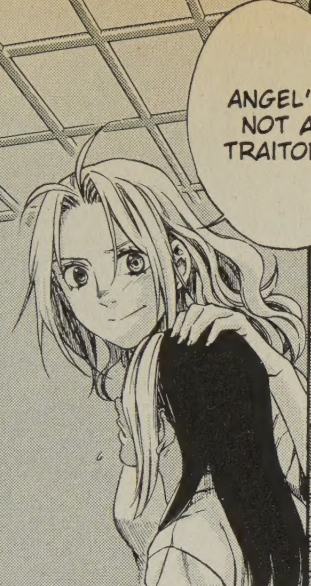
CHOMP

KA-CHUNK
KA-CHUNK

WE
NEED TO
RUN!!

SMASH!!





ANGEL'S
NOT A
TRAITOR.

SHE'S
BEEN
MY *SPY*.

SHE
AND I
AGREED
THAT SHE
WOULD DO
THIS...

...SO
SHE'D BE ON
THE INSIDE
AND COULD
GET US OUT
IF ANYTHING
HAPPENED.

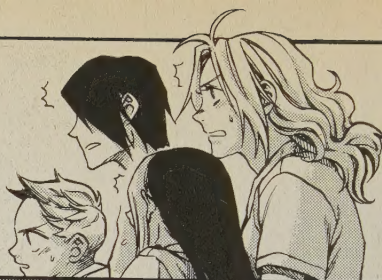
WHA—?!

WE CAME
UP WITH
THIS PLAN
IN CASE
THE WORST
HAPPENED...

...WHICH
IT DID, OF
COURSE.
ANGEL'S NOT
A TRAITOR—
NEVER WAS.

FWOOSH!

THUD



DROP

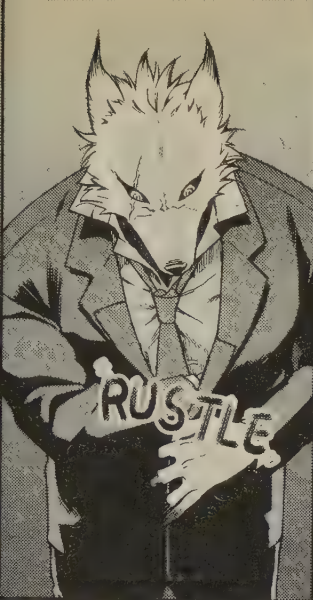
DROP

GRR...

I'LL TAKE
HIM OUT.

HE'S
ON OUR
SIDE!

HE'S GET-
TING YOU
OUT! ARI!
RELEASE
THE SECRET
WEAPON!



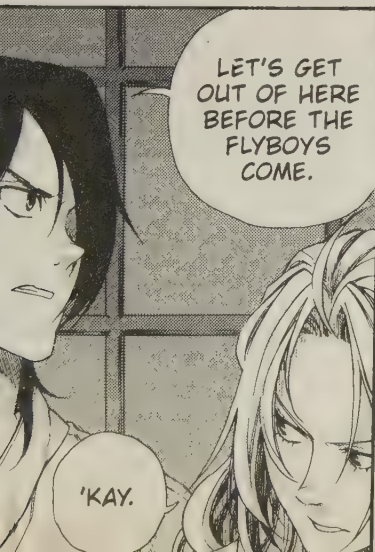
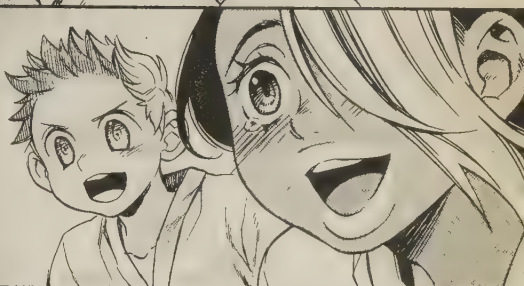
MOVE IT
OR LOSE
IT!

TAT

DA

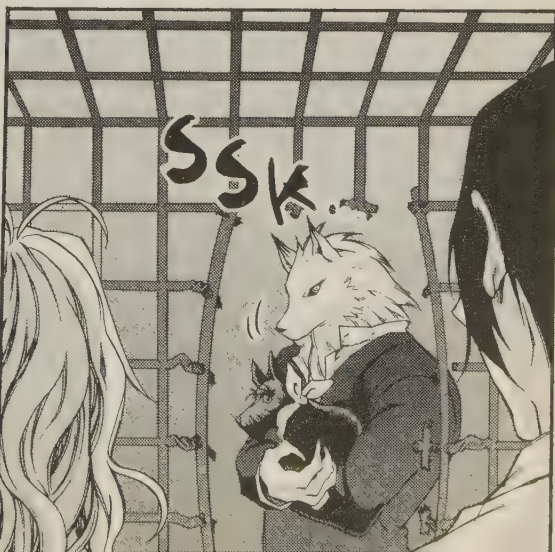
LET'S
GO, GO,
GO!

TOTAL!!

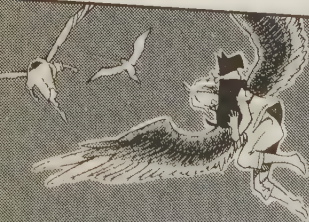
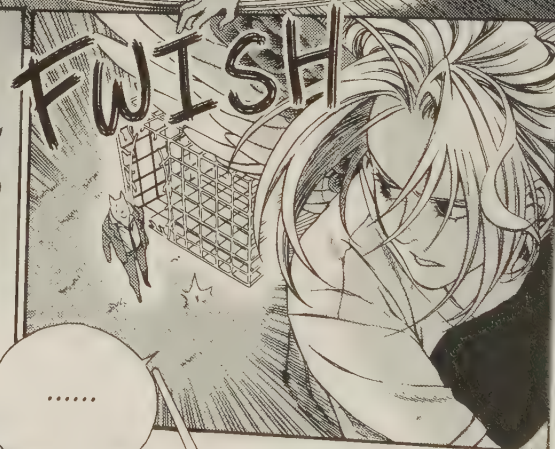
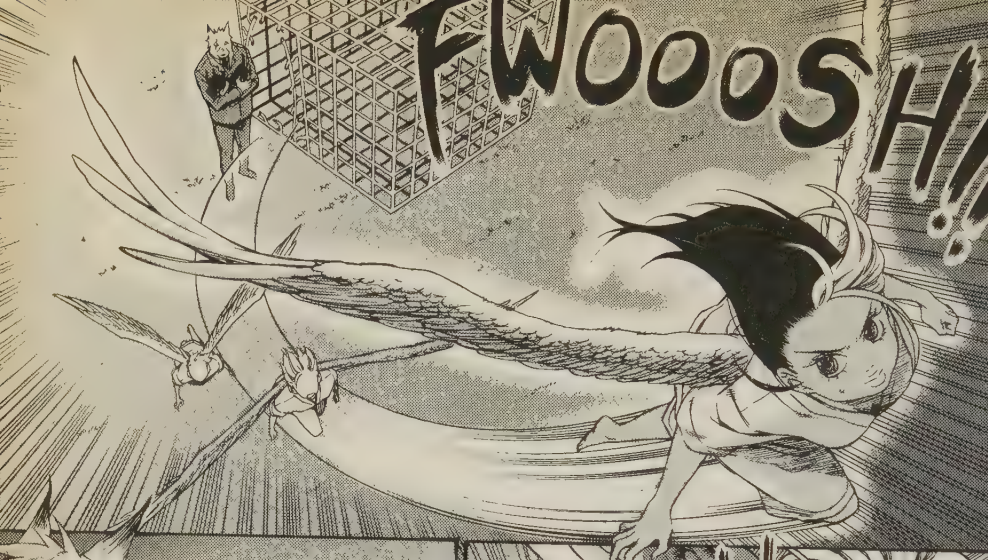


LET'S GET
OUT OF HERE
BEFORE THE
FLYBOYS
COME.

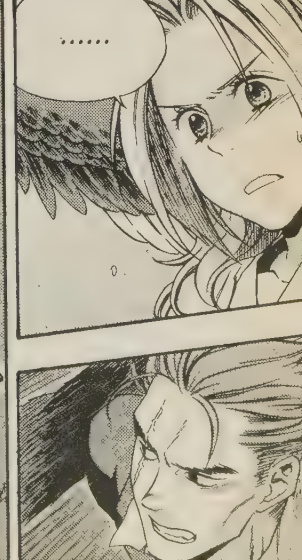
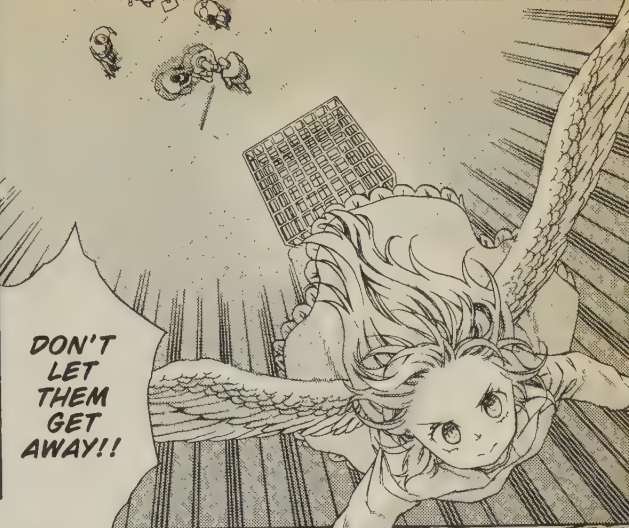
'KAY.



SSK

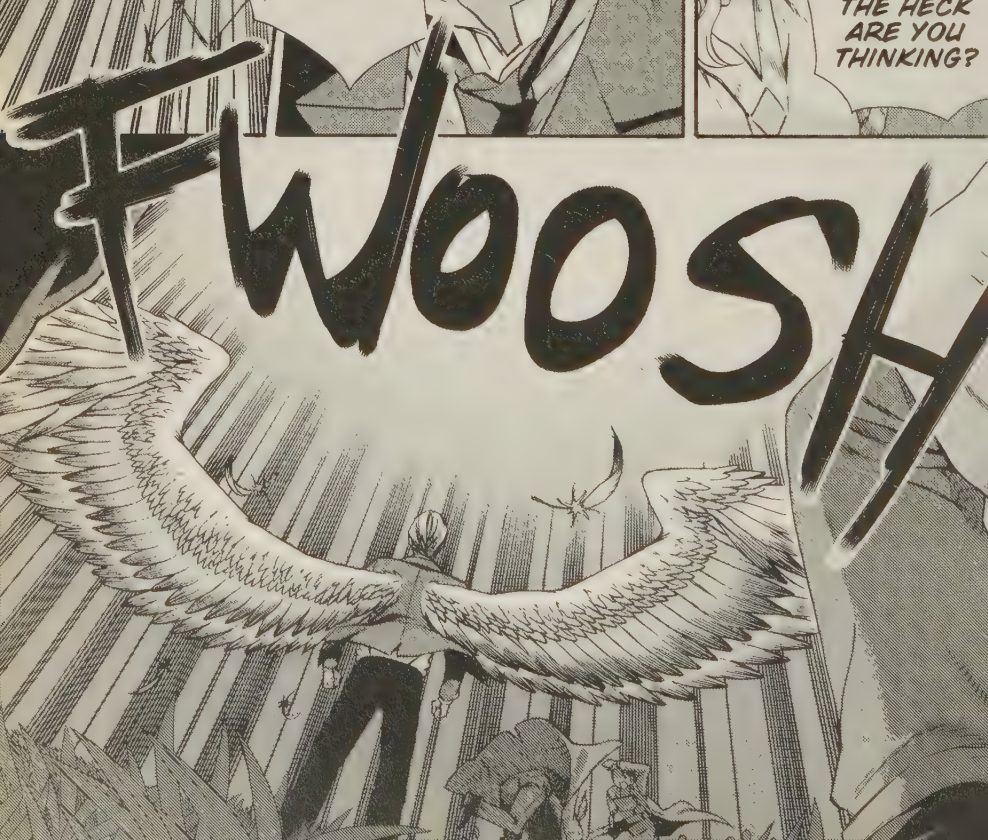
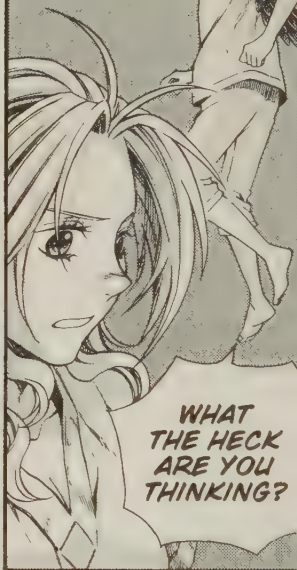


ANGEL,
WE'RE
ALL OUT!
COME!!



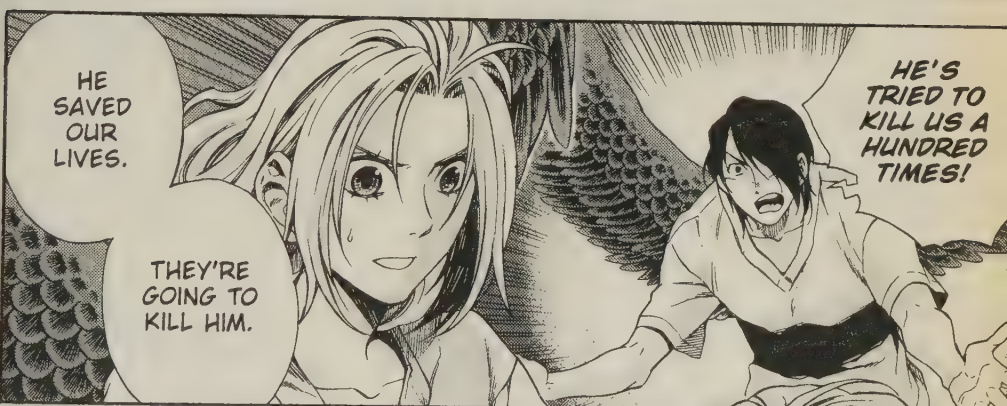


WHAT?!
ARE
YOU
NUTS?



A black and white manga panel. On the left, a young man with dark hair (Max) is shown in profile, shouting with his mouth wide open. He is wearing a short-sleeved shirt. On the right, a young woman with long, light-colored hair (Ari) is shown from the chest up, looking towards Max with a concerned expression. She has her hand near her face. In the background, a large crowd of small figures is visible, along with a large, dark, rectangular object that looks like a building or a container. The scene is set outdoors with some foliage visible on the left.

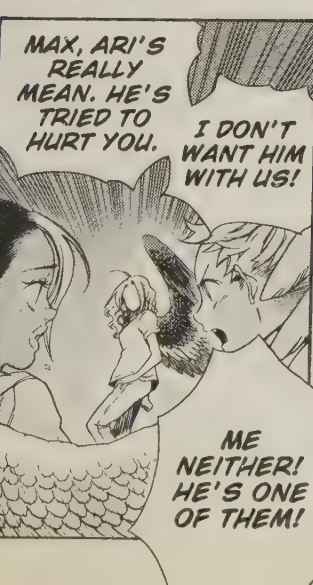
**MAX, YOU
ARE WAY
OUT OF LINE.
THERE'S NO
WAY HE'S
COMING
WITH US!**

A black and white manga panel. On the left, a close-up of Ari's face. She has long, light-colored hair and is looking forward with a slight smile. On the right, Max is shown from the chest up, looking towards Ari with a determined expression. He is wearing a short-sleeved shirt and a dark belt. The background is dark and indistinct.

**HE
SAVED
OUR
LIVES.**

**THEY'RE
GOING TO
KILL HIM.**

**HE'S
TRIED TO
KILL US A
HUNDRED
TIMES!**

A black and white manga panel. On the left, a close-up of Ari's face. She has long, light-colored hair and is looking towards Max with a slight smile. On the right, Max is shown from the chest up, looking towards Ari with a determined expression. He is wearing a short-sleeved shirt and a dark belt. The background is dark and indistinct.

**MAX, ARI'S
REALLY
MEAN. HE'S
TRIED TO
HURT YOU.**

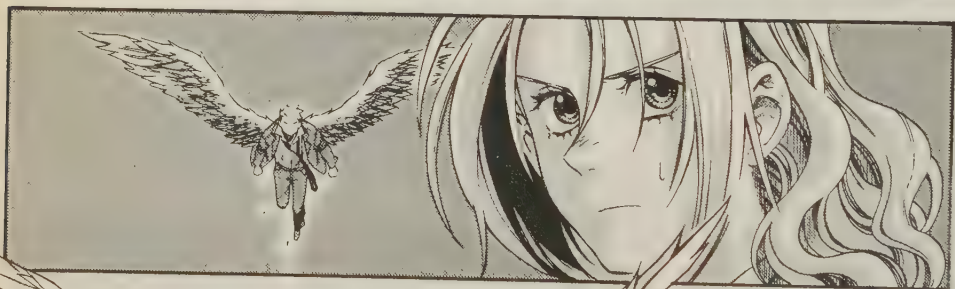
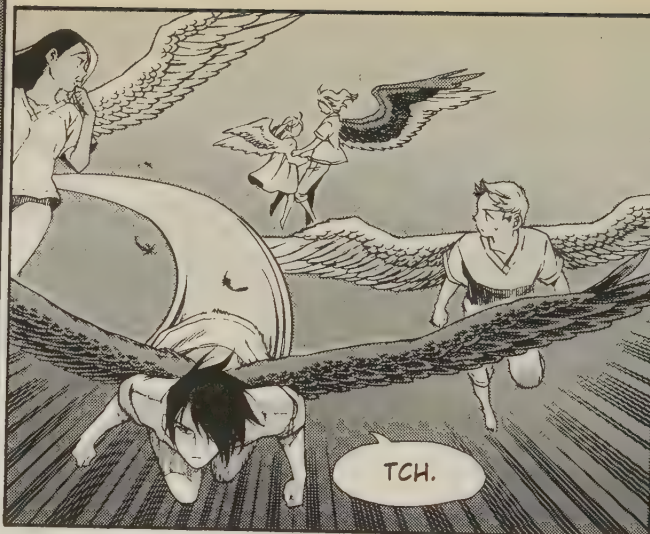
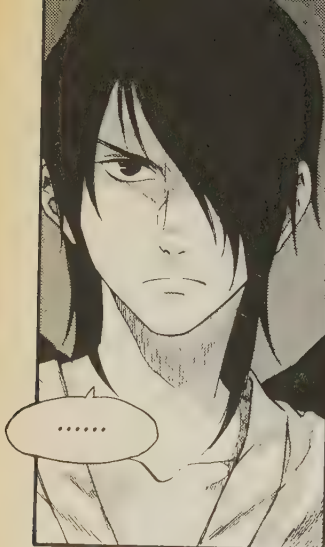
**I DON'T
WANT HIM
WITH US!**

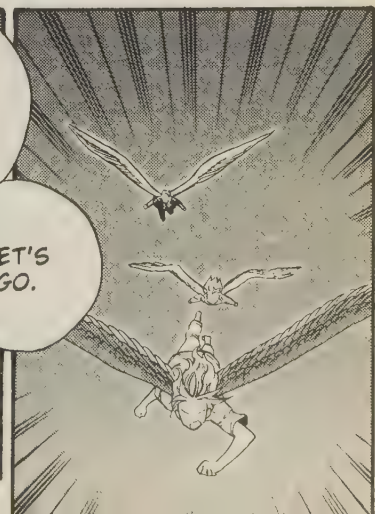
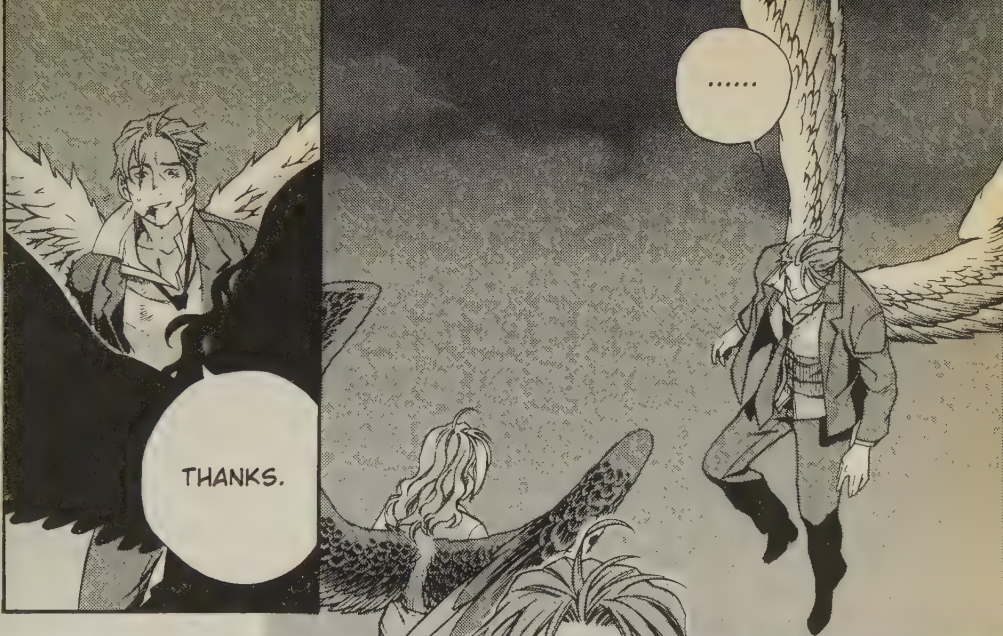
**I THINK
HE'S
CHANGED.**

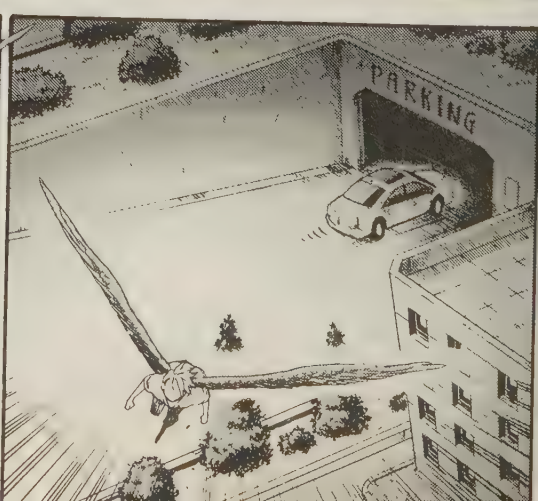
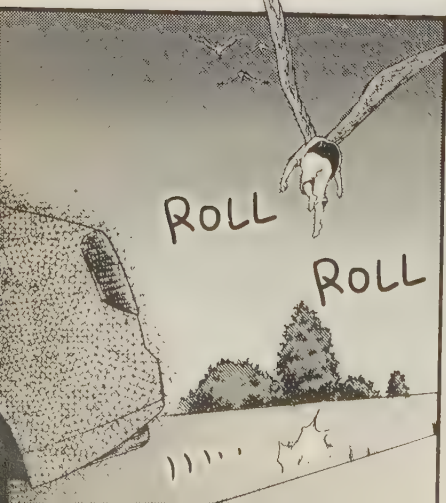
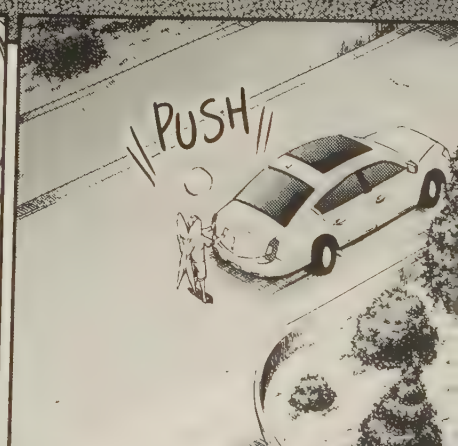
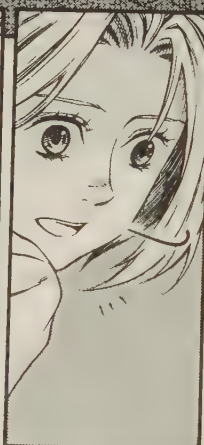
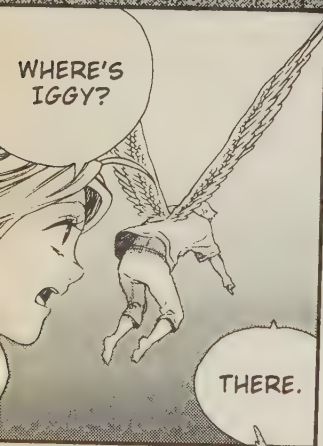
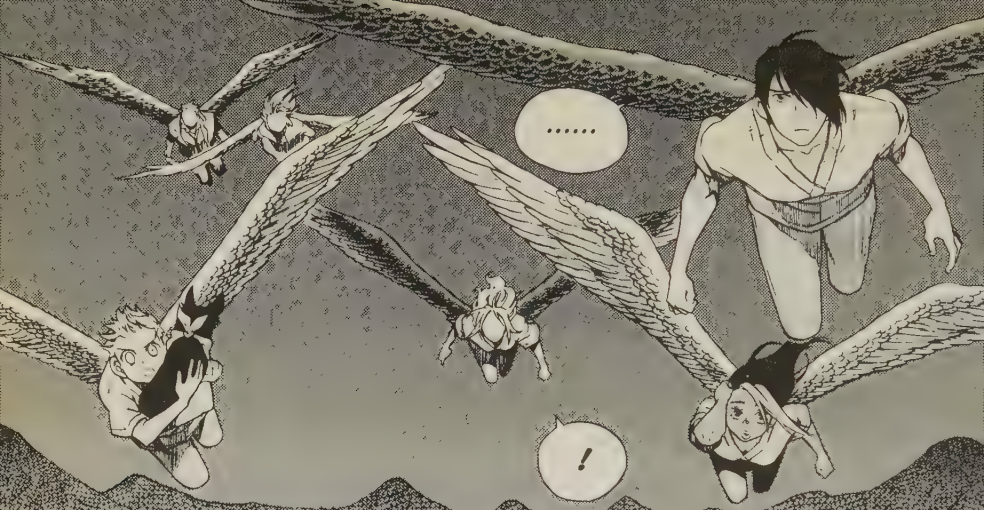
**HE
HELPED
GET US
OUT.**

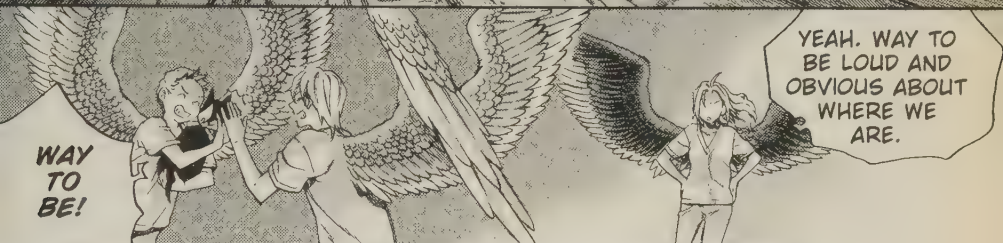
**ME
NEITHER!
HE'S ONE
OF THEM!**

**AND
HE FOUND
TOTAL FOR
US.**









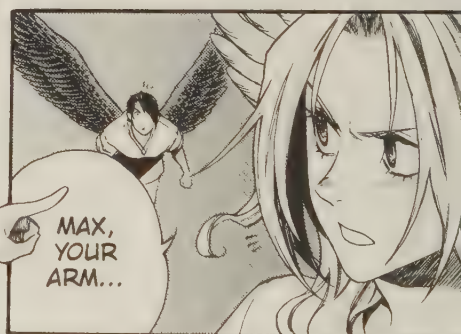
HELLO,
MAXIMUM.
I'M GLAD
YOU'RE
OKAY.

I'VE
MISSED
TALKING
WITH YOU.

HELLO,
VOICE. I
CAN'T SAY
THAT I'VE
MISSED YOU,
BUT I SORT
OF MISSED
YOU TOO.

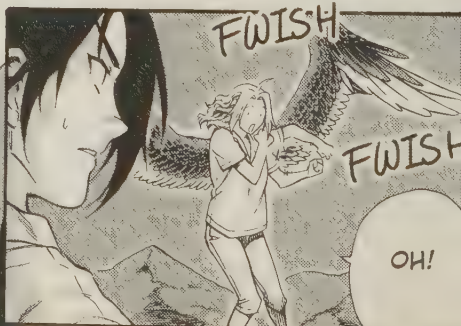
MAX,
WHAT
NOW?

HMM?



MAX,
YOUR
ARM...

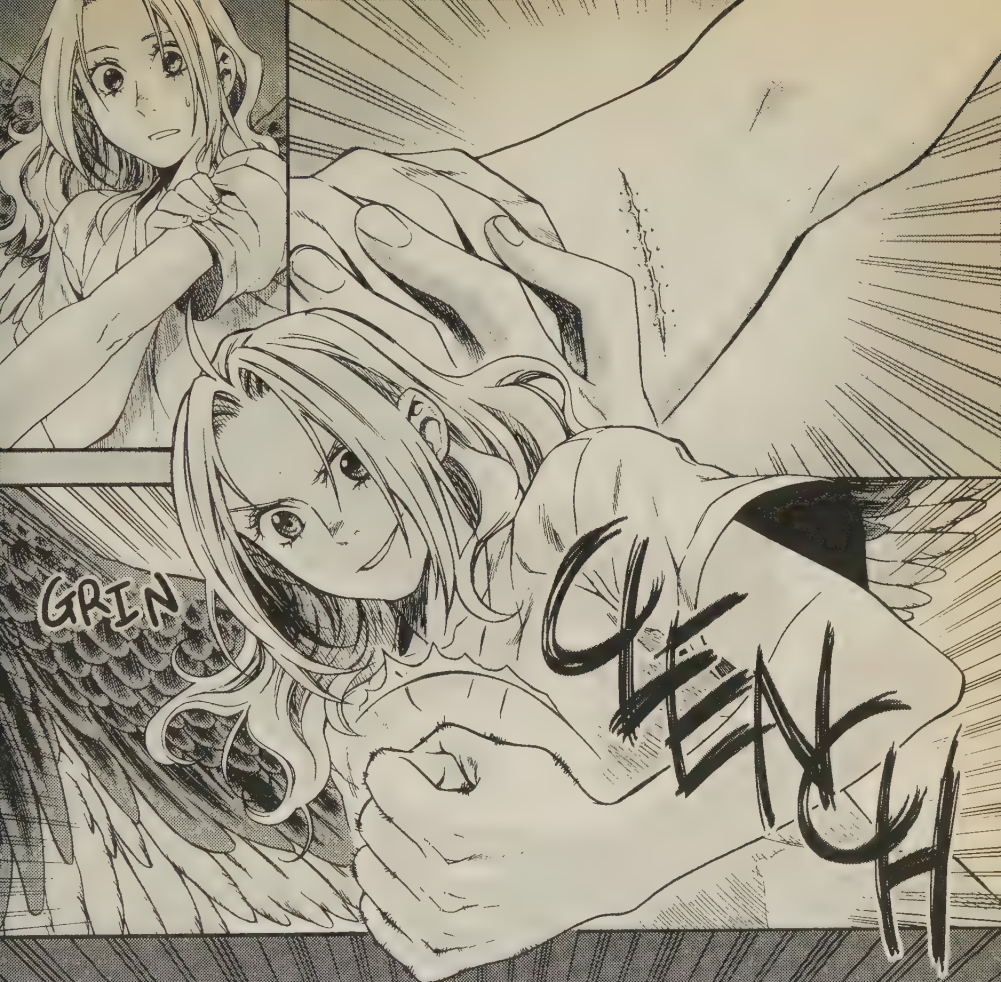
LET'S
HEAD
NORTH.



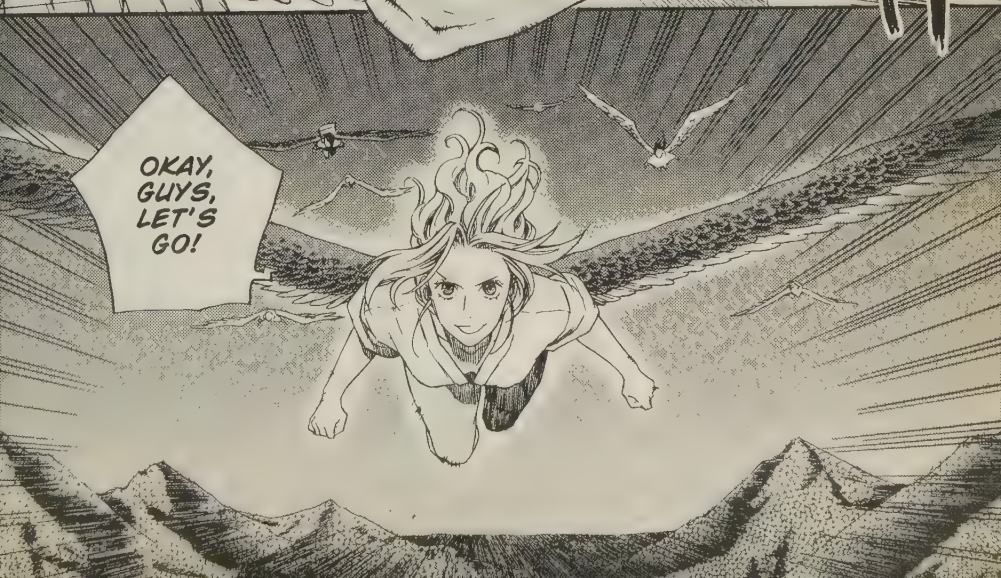
FWISH

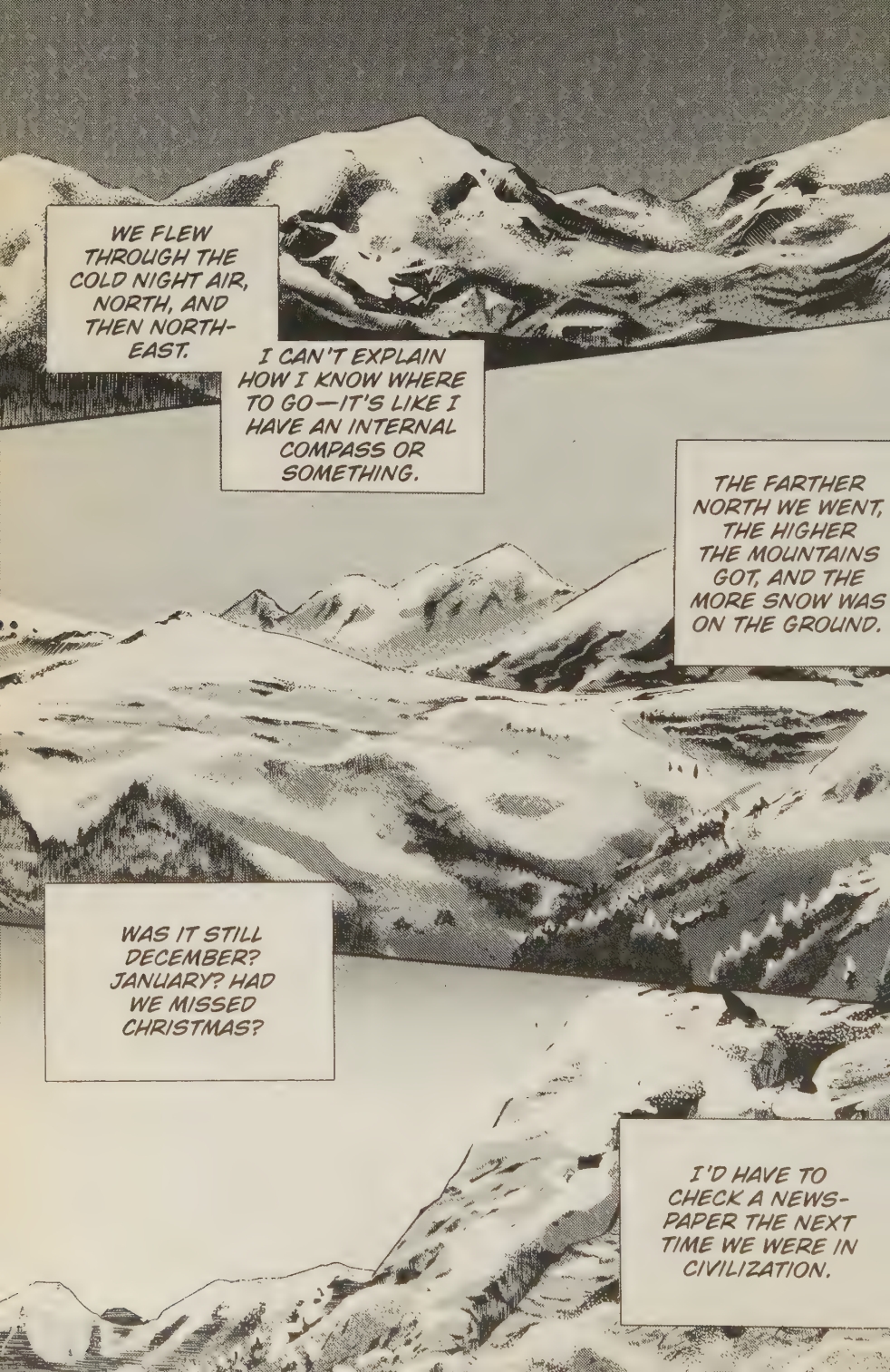
FWISH

OH!



OKAY,
GUYS,
LET'S
GO!





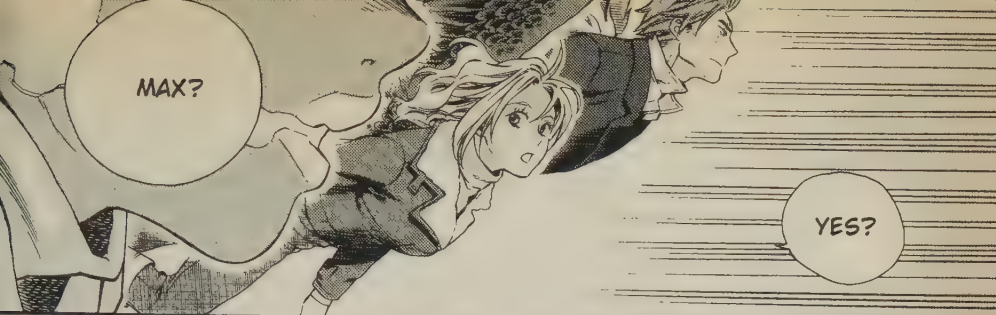
WE FLEW
THROUGH THE
COLD NIGHT AIR,
NORTH, AND
THEN NORTH-
EAST.

I CAN'T EXPLAIN
HOW I KNOW WHERE
TO GO—IT'S LIKE I
HAVE AN INTERNAL
COMPASS OR
SOMETHING.

THE FARTHER
NORTH WE WENT,
THE HIGHER
THE MOUNTAINS
GOT, AND THE
MORE SNOW WAS
ON THE GROUND.

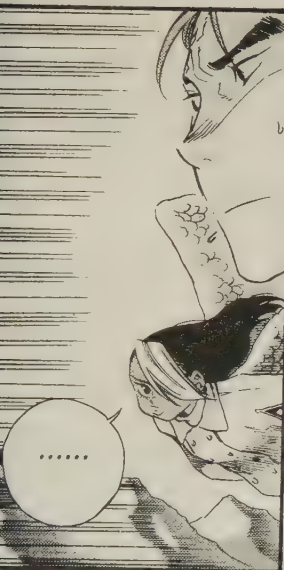
WAS IT STILL
DECEMBER?
JANUARY? HAD
WE MISSED
CHRISTMAS?

I'D HAVE TO
CHECK A NEWS-
PAPER THE NEXT
TIME WE WERE IN
CIVILIZATION.



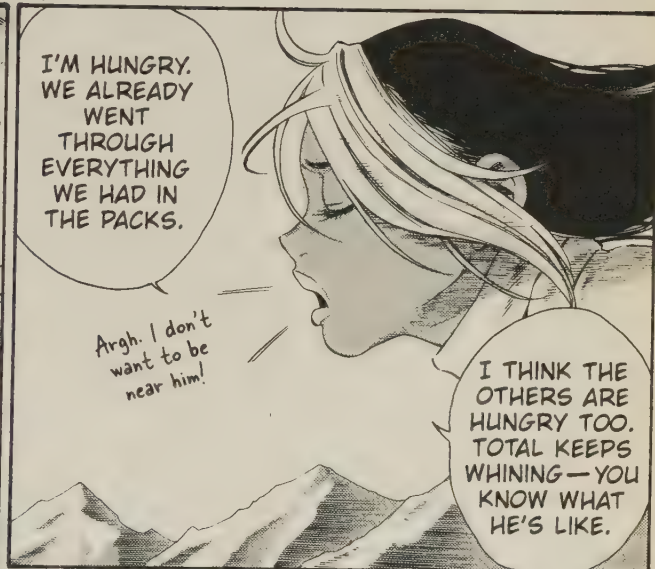
MAX?

YES?



I'M HUNGRY.
WE ALREADY
WENT
THROUGH
EVERYTHING
WE HAD IN
THE PACKS.

Argh. I don't
want to be
near him!



I THINK THE
OTHERS ARE
HUNGRY TOO.
TOTAL KEEPS
WHINING— YOU
KNOW WHAT
HE'S LIKE.



UH-
HUH.

SO, UH, IS
THERE A
PLAN TO
STOP SOME-
WHERE?
GET SOME
FOOD?



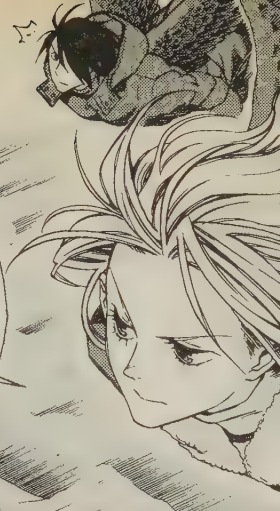
THERE'S
ALWAYS
A PLAN.



WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?
A LITTLE
HIDEAWAY
THAT ARI
KNOWS
ABOUT?

REMEMBER
THE SKI
HOUSE WE
FOUND IN
COLORADO?

MAYBE
IT'S STILL
UNOCCUPIED.
BE A PLACE
TO REST UP.



NO WAY!
YOU KNOW
THE RULES—
NEVER RE-
TURN TO A
PLACE YOU'VE
BEEN!

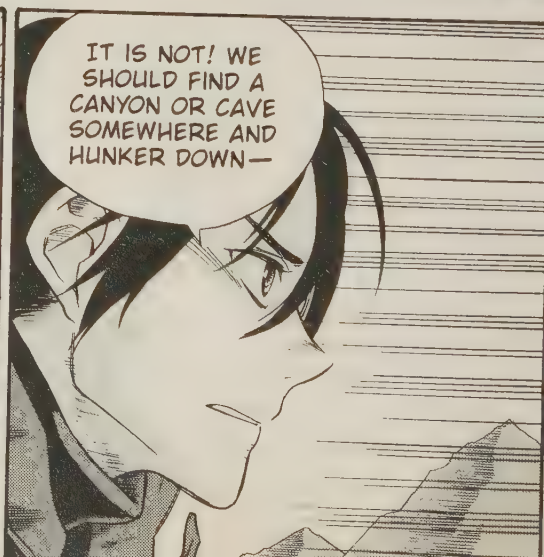
IF
SOME-
ONE'S BEEN
THERE, THEY
WOULD HAVE
BEEFED
UP THEIR
SECURITY.

IF NO ONE'S
BEEN THERE,
WE PRETTY
MUCH CLEANED
OUT ALL THE
FOOD ANYWAY!

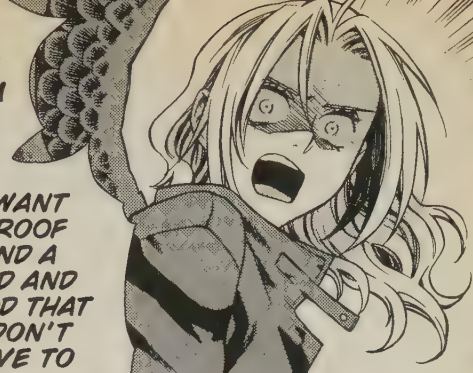


I'VE
THOUGHT
OF THAT.

BUT WE
NEED SOME
DOWNTIME,
AND IT'S OUR
BEST OPTION.



IT IS NOT! WE
SHOULD FIND A
CANYON OR CAVE
SOMEWHERE AND
HUNKER DOWN—

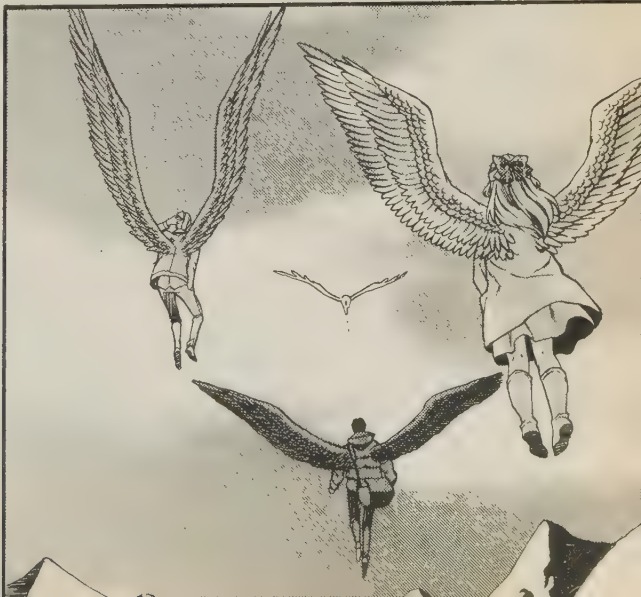
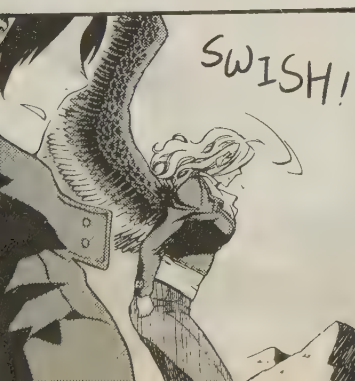


I'M TIRED
OF DESERT
RAT, MEDIUM
RARE!

I WANT
A ROOF
AND A
BED AND
FOOD THAT
I DON'T
HAVE TO
CATCH AND
SKIN!

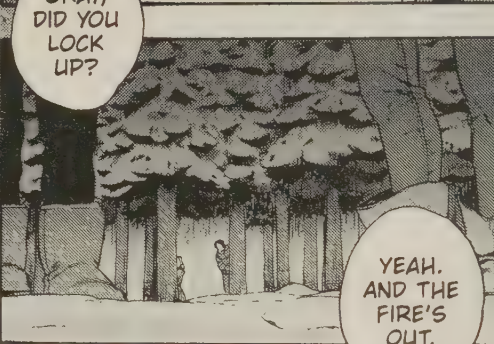


I'M
TIRED OF
CAVES AND
CANYONS!

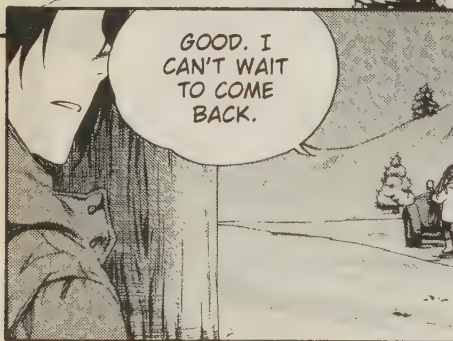




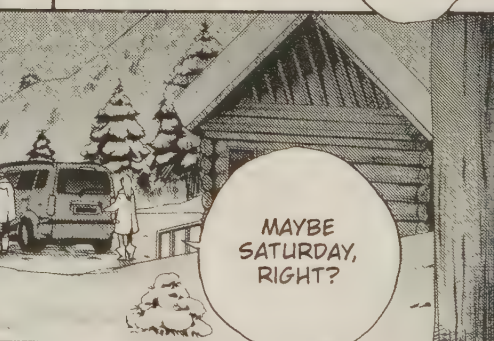
OKAY,
DID YOU
LOCK
UP?



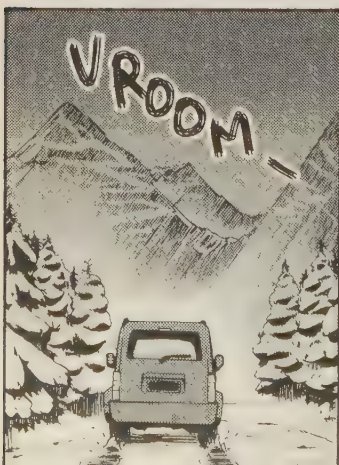
YEAH.
AND THE
FIRE'S
OUT.



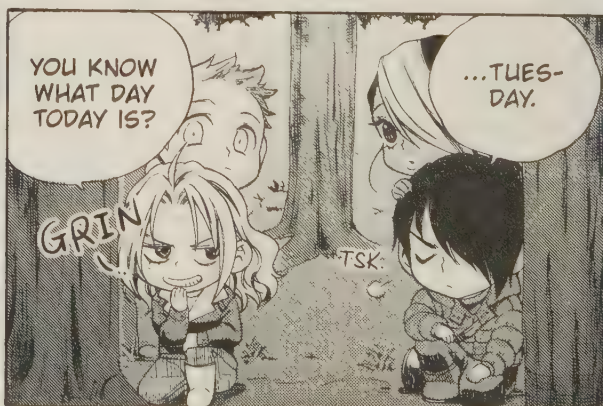
GOOD. I
CAN'T WAIT
TO COME
BACK.



MAYBE
SATURDAY,
RIGHT?



VROOM-

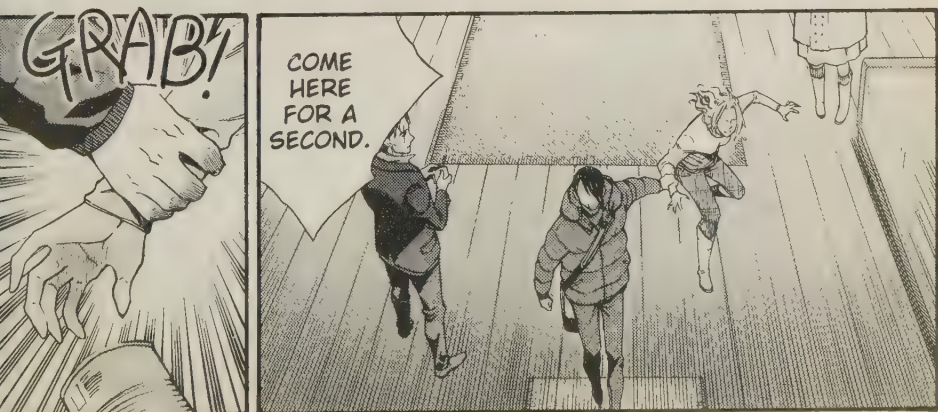


YOU KNOW
WHAT DAY
TODAY IS?

GRIN

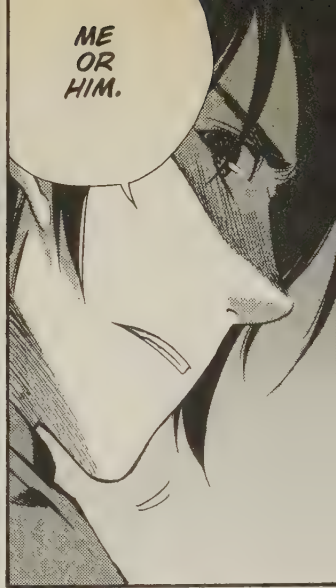
...TUES-
DAY.

TSK.





CHOOSE
NOW.



ME
OR
HIM.

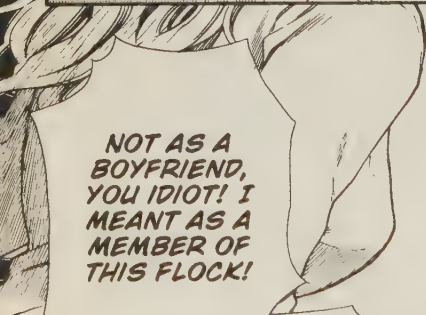


GOSH, FANG,
YOU ROMANTIC
FOOL, HOW
INCREDIBLY
SEXIST-PIG
OF YOU.

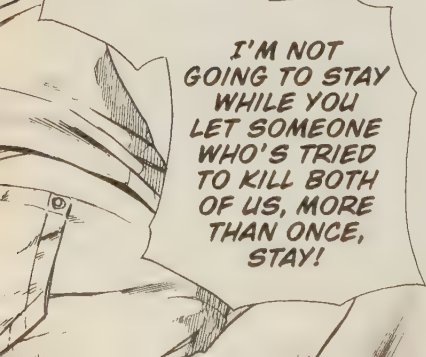
HA!!



.....



NOT AS A
BOYFRIEND,
YOU IDIOT! I
MEANT AS A
MEMBER OF
THIS FLOCK!



I'M NOT
GOING TO STAY
WHILE YOU
LET SOMEONE
WHO'S TRIED
TO KILL BOTH
OF US, MORE
THAN ONCE,
STAY!

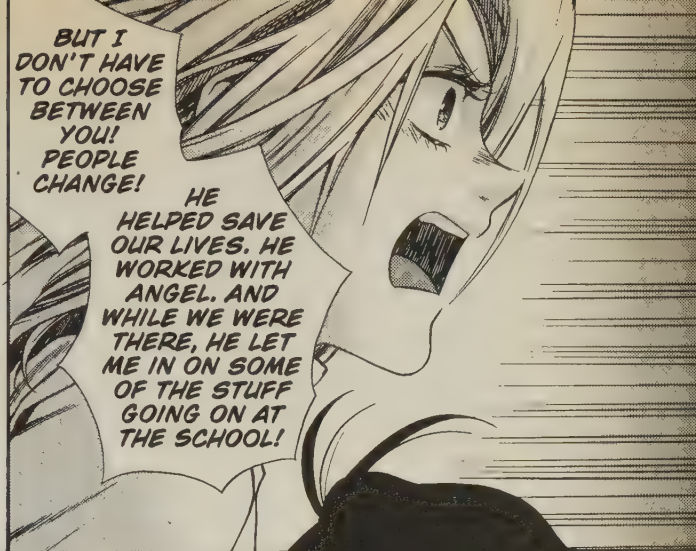


EITHER
HE GOES
OR I GO!

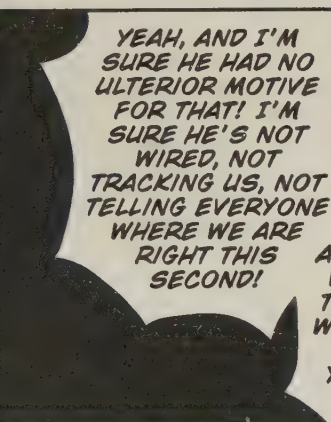


THINK ABOUT IT, I'LL FIGURE THAT SENTENCE OUT.

BUT I DON'T HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN YOU! PEOPLE CHANGE!

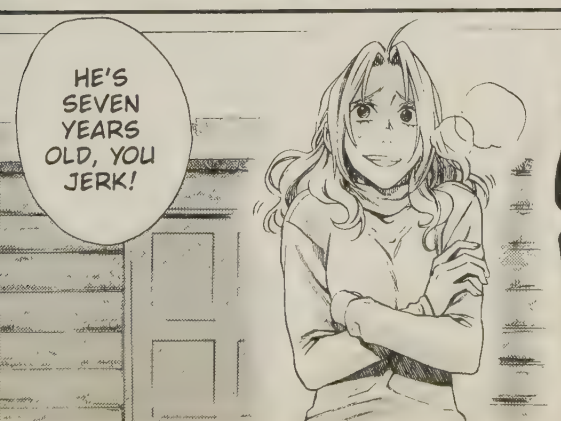


HE HELPED SAVE OUR LIVES. HE WORKED WITH ANGEL. AND WHILE WE WERE THERE, HE LET ME IN ON SOME OF THE STUFF GOING ON AT THE SCHOOL!

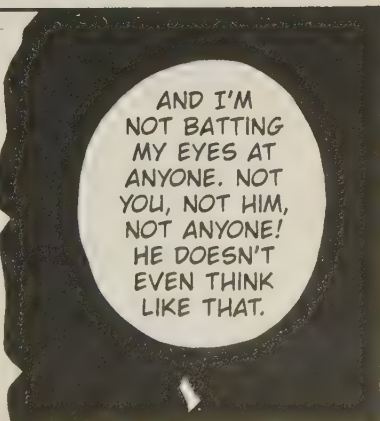


YEAH, AND I'M SURE HE HAD NO ULTERIOR MOTIVE FOR THAT! I'M SURE HE'S NOT WIRED, NOT TRACKING US, NOT TELLING EVERYONE WHERE WE ARE RIGHT THIS SECOND!

I'M SURE ALL THE BRAIN-WASHING AND TRAINING JUST WORE OFF ONCE YOU BATTED YOUR EYES AT HIM!



HE'S SEVEN YEARS OLD, YOU JERK!



AND I'M NOT BATTING MY EYES AT ANYONE. NOT YOU, NOT HIM, NOT ANYONE! HE DOESN'T EVEN THINK LIKE THAT.



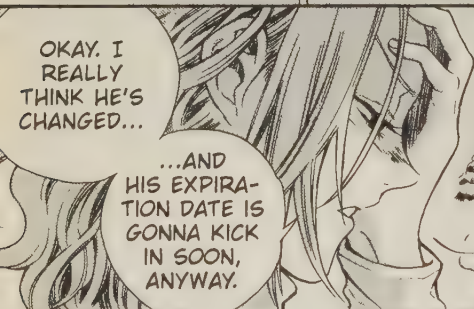
**ARI'S A
KILLER!**

**HE'S
TOXIC!
THEY'VE
POLLUTED
HIM AND
SCREWED
HIM UP SO
MUCH HE
CAN'T EVEN
THINK.**



**HE'S A
TOTAL
LIABILITY,
AND YOU'RE
OUT OF
YOUR MIND
IF YOU THINK
IT'S FINE
THAT HE'S
HERE!**

.....



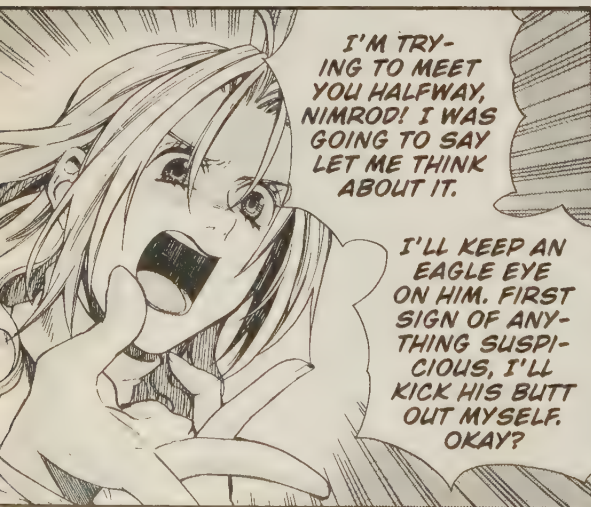
**OKAY. I
REALLY
THINK HE'S
CHANGED...**

**...AND
HIS EXPIRA-
TION DATE IS
GONNA KICK
IN SOON,
ANYWAY.**

**BUT I KNOW
HIS BEING
HERE IS BUM-
MING EVERY-
ONE OUT.**

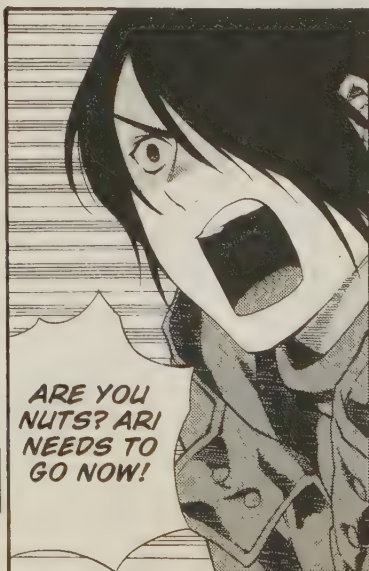


**YOU
PICKED UP
ON THAT,
HUH,
SHER-
LOCK?**



**I'M TRY-
ING TO MEET
YOU HALFWAY,
NIMROD! I WAS
GOING TO SAY
LET ME THINK
ABOUT IT.**

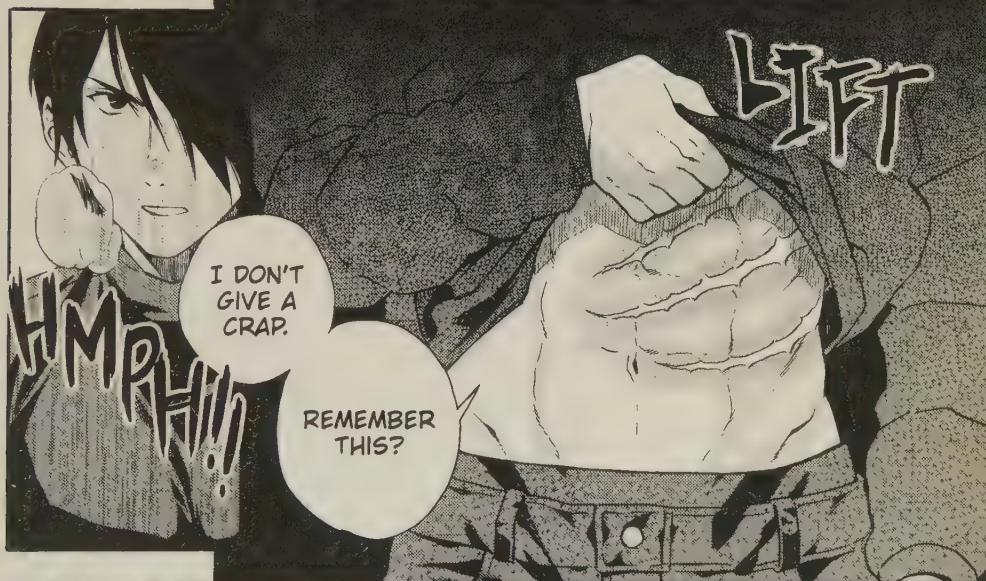
**I'LL KEEP AN
EAGLE EYE
ON HIM. FIRST
SIGN OF ANY-
THING SUSPI-
CIOUS, I'LL
KICK HIS BUTT
OUT MYSELF.
OKAY?**



**ARE YOU
NUTS? ARI
NEEDS TO
GO NOW!**

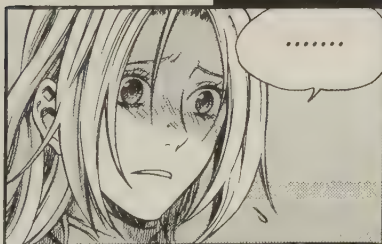
HE DOESN'T
HAVE ANYWHERE
ELSE TO GO!
HE HELPED US,
REMEMBER?
THEY'RE NOT
GONNA LET HIM
BACK IN.

PLUS, I KEEP
TELLING YOU,
HE'S ONLY SEVEN
YEARS OLD, NO
MATTER HOW BIG
HE IS. HOW'S
HE GONNA
SURVIVE?



I DON'T
GIVE A
CRAP.

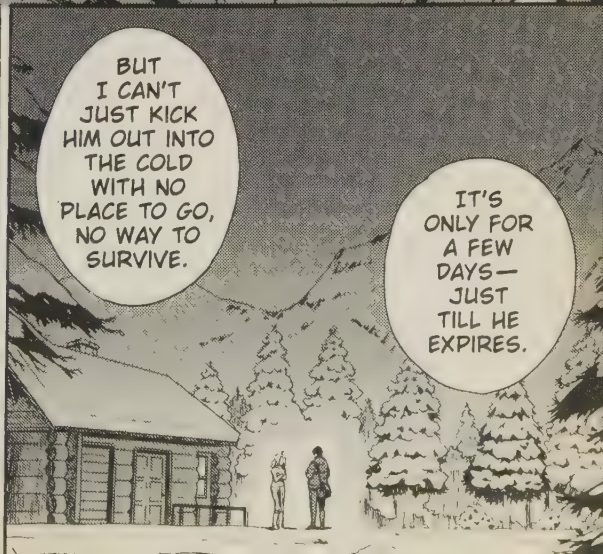
REMEMBER
THIS?



I REMEM-
BER.

BUT
I CAN'T
JUST KICK
HIM OUT INTO
THE COLD
WITH NO
PLACE TO GO,
NO WAY TO
SURVIVE.

IT'S
ONLY FOR
A FEW
DAYS—
JUST
TILL HE
EXPIRES.

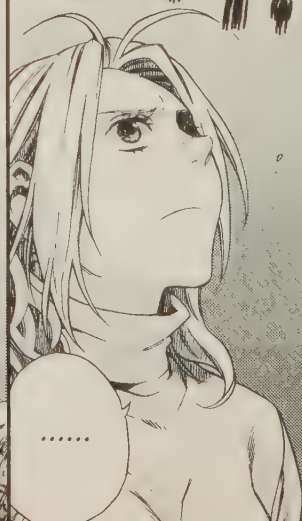


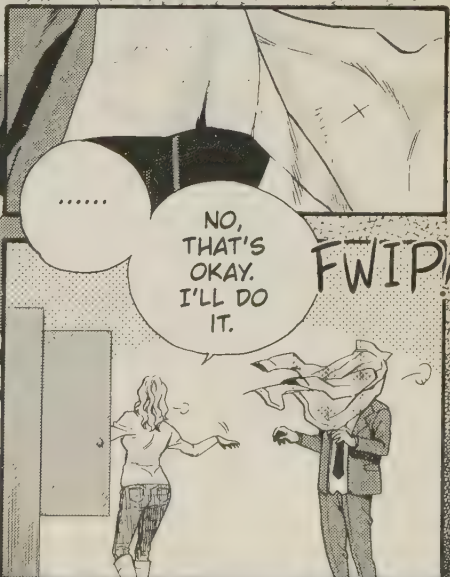
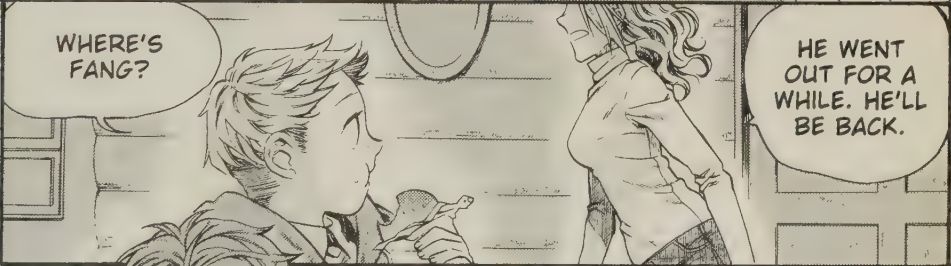
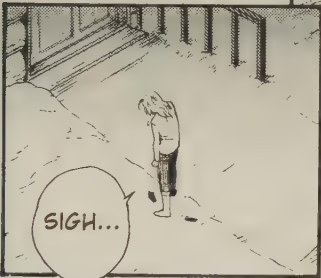
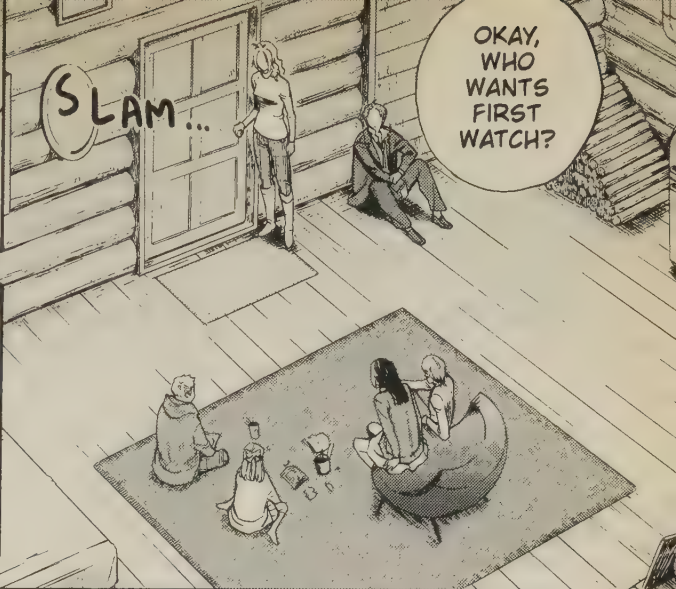


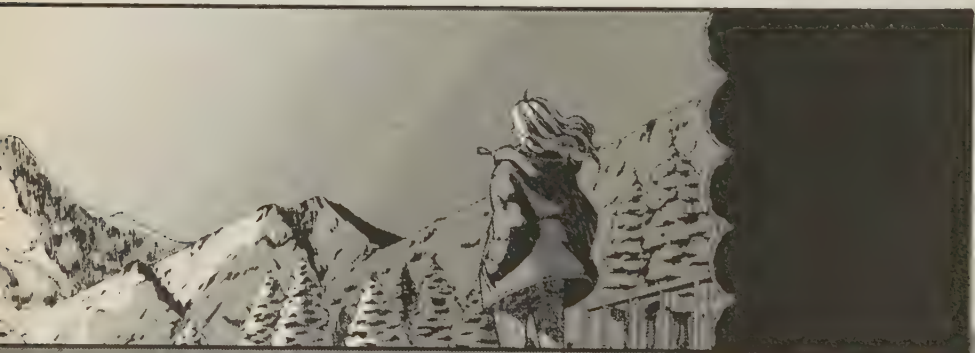
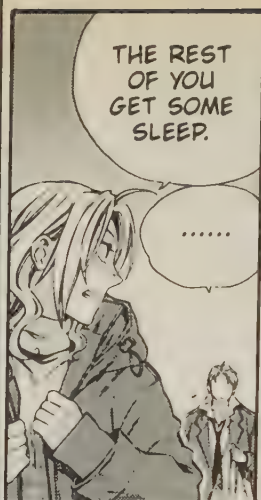
YOU'RE
MAKING
YOUR WORST
MISTAKE.

AND
IT'S GONNA
COST YOU.
YOU'LL SEE.

KWOOOSH!







TO EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE
WARNING
HEADS-UP
EVIL SCIENTISTS WILL END LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

And even as we don't know it.
I know what it's called now, folks. It's called the Re-Evolution Plan. And the By-Half Plan. We got out of the School (anyone who wants to bomb them, feel free). Now we're in hiding, ha-ha. While we were there, we found out that the plan is to basically KILL anyone with any kind of disease or weakness. The only people left will be perfectly healthy and have useful skills. So everyone bone up on something useful! Or go into hiding. And if you have the sniffles, crawl under a rock and don't come out.

What would be useful, you ask? I've made a chart.

USEFUL	NOT USEFUL
Plumber	Politician
Carpenter	Publicist
Boat builder	Art history buff
Farmer	Celebrity chef
Sanitation crew	Interior designer
Cattle rancher	Pet psychic
Scientist	Celebrity rock/pop/hip-hop star
Military	Teen idol
Medical personnel	Life coach

So this would be a good time to examine your career goals.
Last time I checked, more than 28 million people had hit this blog. Way to go, people. Save yourselves. Save your brothers and sisters. Don't let the whitecoats get you.

And if you see any flying kids, keep your mouth shut.

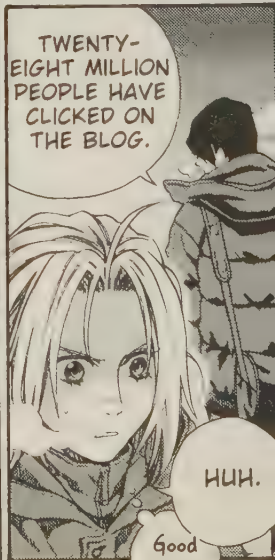
— Fang, from somewhere in America



Fang

Today's date:
Already Too
Late!

Visitor number
.....
28,772,461



I'M
PUTTING
EVERYTHING I
KNOW ABOUT
WHAT'S
GOING ON
OUT THERE.

MAYBE IF
ENOUGH
PEOPLE GET
A HEADS-UP,
THEY CAN STOP
WHATEVER'S
HAPPENING.

I THOUGHT
WE WERE
SUPPOSED
TO STOP IT.

YOU DON'T
HAVE TO
SAVE THE
WORLD,
MAX...

...NO
MATTER
WHAT THEY
TELL YOU.



SO NOW
YOU AND
YOUR BLOG
ARE GOING
TO DO IT?

FINE.
YOU'RE ON
SECOND
WATCH.

I CAN
GO TO BED
AND SLEEP
IN?

.....

FWOOSH

THE NEXT
MORNING.

ARE
YOU OUT
OF YOUR
MIND?!

YOU'RE
BASING
YOUR PLAN
FOR HUMAN
SALVATION ON
A VOICE
INSIDE YOUR
HEAD.

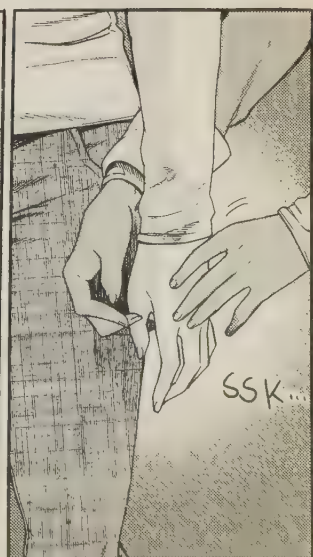
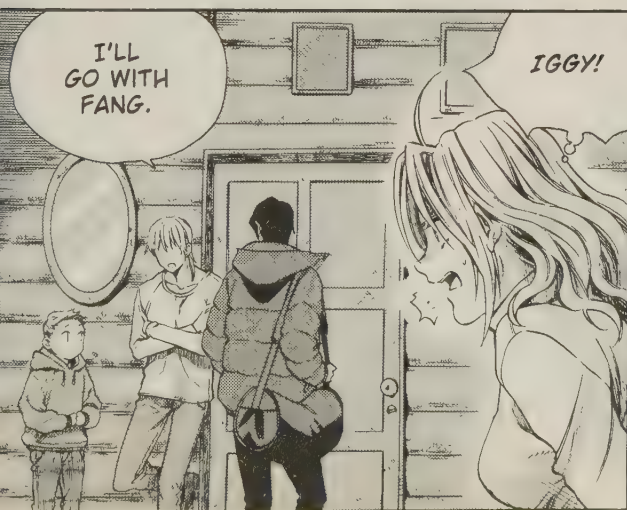
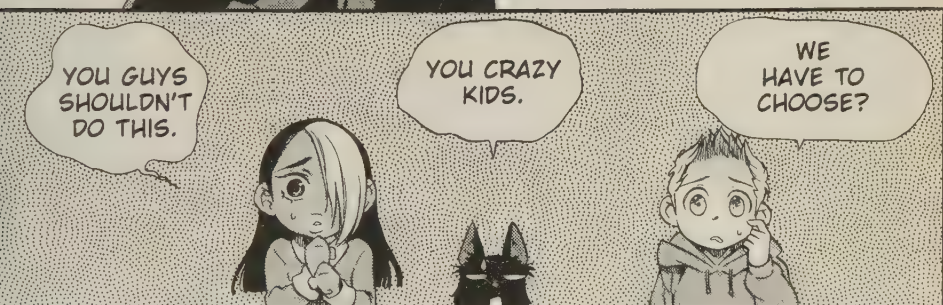
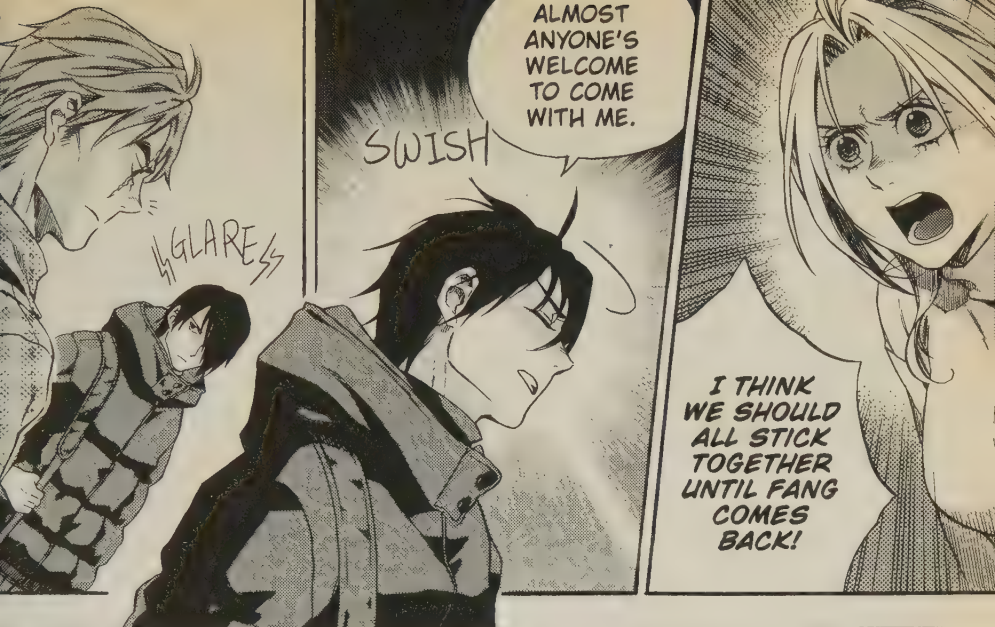
PACK
PACK

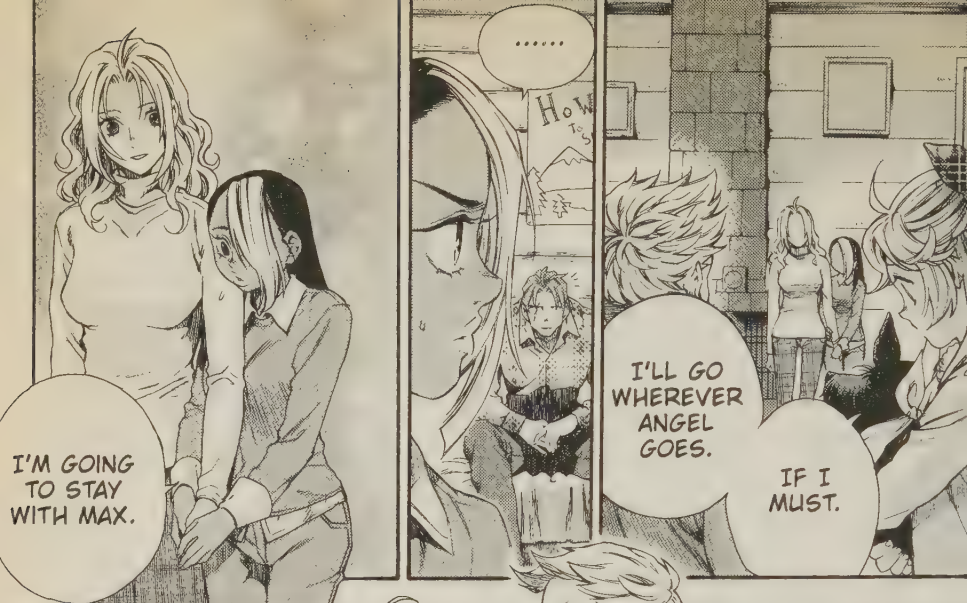
A VOICE
THAT ISN'T
ACTUALLY
JUST YOU
TALKING TO
YOURSELF.
RIGHT?

I'M BASING
MINE ON THE
INFORMATION
FROM MY
BLOG.

I'VE
DECIDED
TO GO MY
OWN WAY.

MAX...



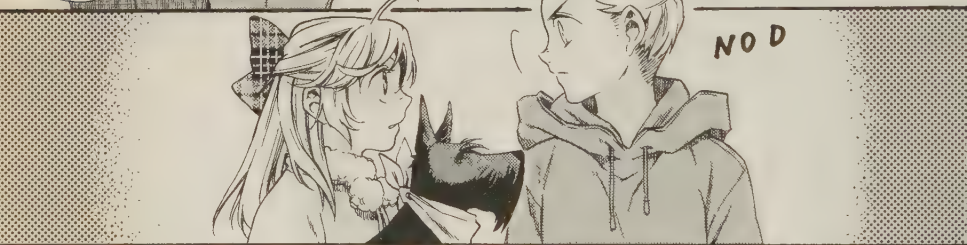


I'M GOING TO STAY WITH MAX.

How To...

I'LL GO WHEREVER ANGEL GOES.

IF I MUST.

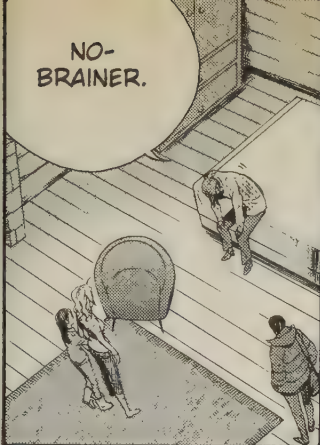


NO D



I'M GOING WITH MAX.

I'M GOING WITH FANG.



NO-BRAINER.



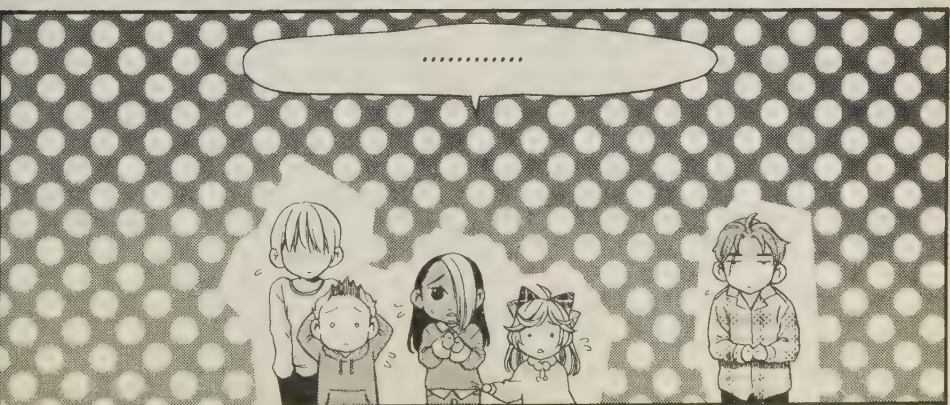
MAX.



FINE.



FINE!



.....

SILENCE...

.....

I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY WENT.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?

DO WE HAVE A PLAN?

THERE'S ALWAYS A PLAN. HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU GUYS?

GO TO EUROPE.

NICE TIMING, VOICE.

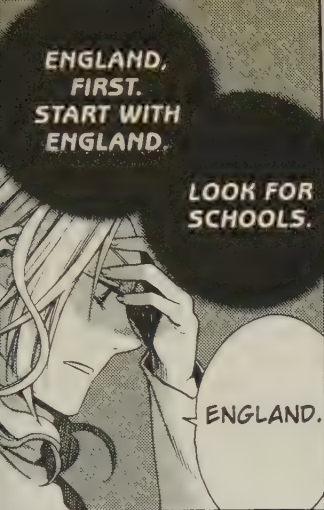
WE'RE GOING TO EUROPE.

SSK...

EUROPE!

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO GO TO EUROPE!

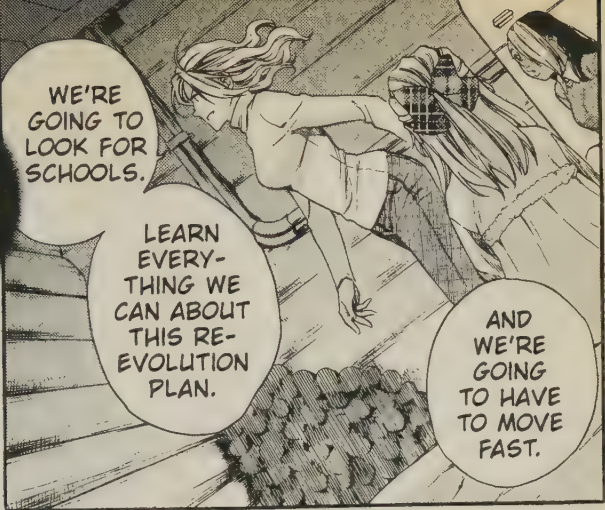
WHERE ARE WE GOING?



ENGLAND,
FIRST.
START WITH
ENGLAND.

LOOK FOR
SCHOOLS.

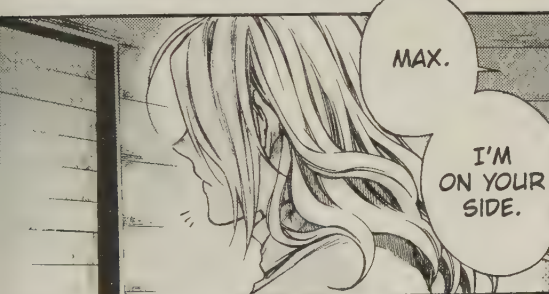
ENGLAND.



WE'RE
GOING TO
LOOK FOR
SCHOOLS.

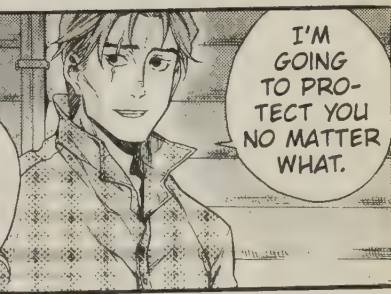
LEARN
EVERY-
THING WE
CAN ABOUT
THIS RE-
EVOLUTION
PLAN.

AND
WE'RE
GOING
TO HAVE
TO MOVE
FAST.



MAX.

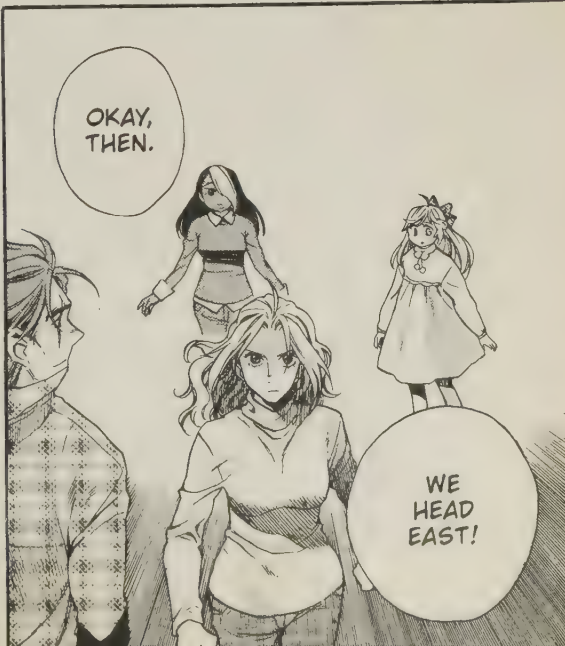
I'M
ON YOUR
SIDE.



I'M
GOING
TO PRO-
TECT YOU
NO MATTER
WHAT.



UNTIL MY
EXPIRA-
TION DATE,
ANYWAY.

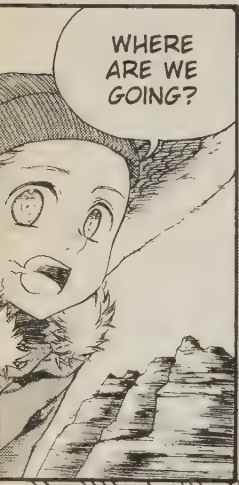


OKAY,
THEN.

WE
HEAD
EAST!



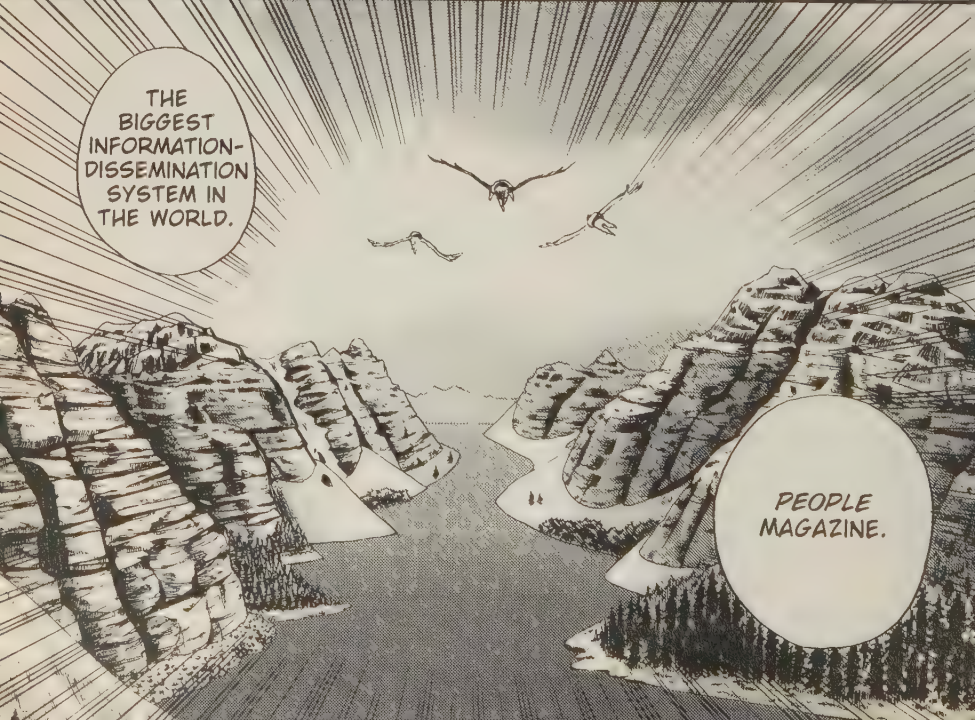
FANG?



WHERE
ARE WE
GOING?



WEST
COAST.

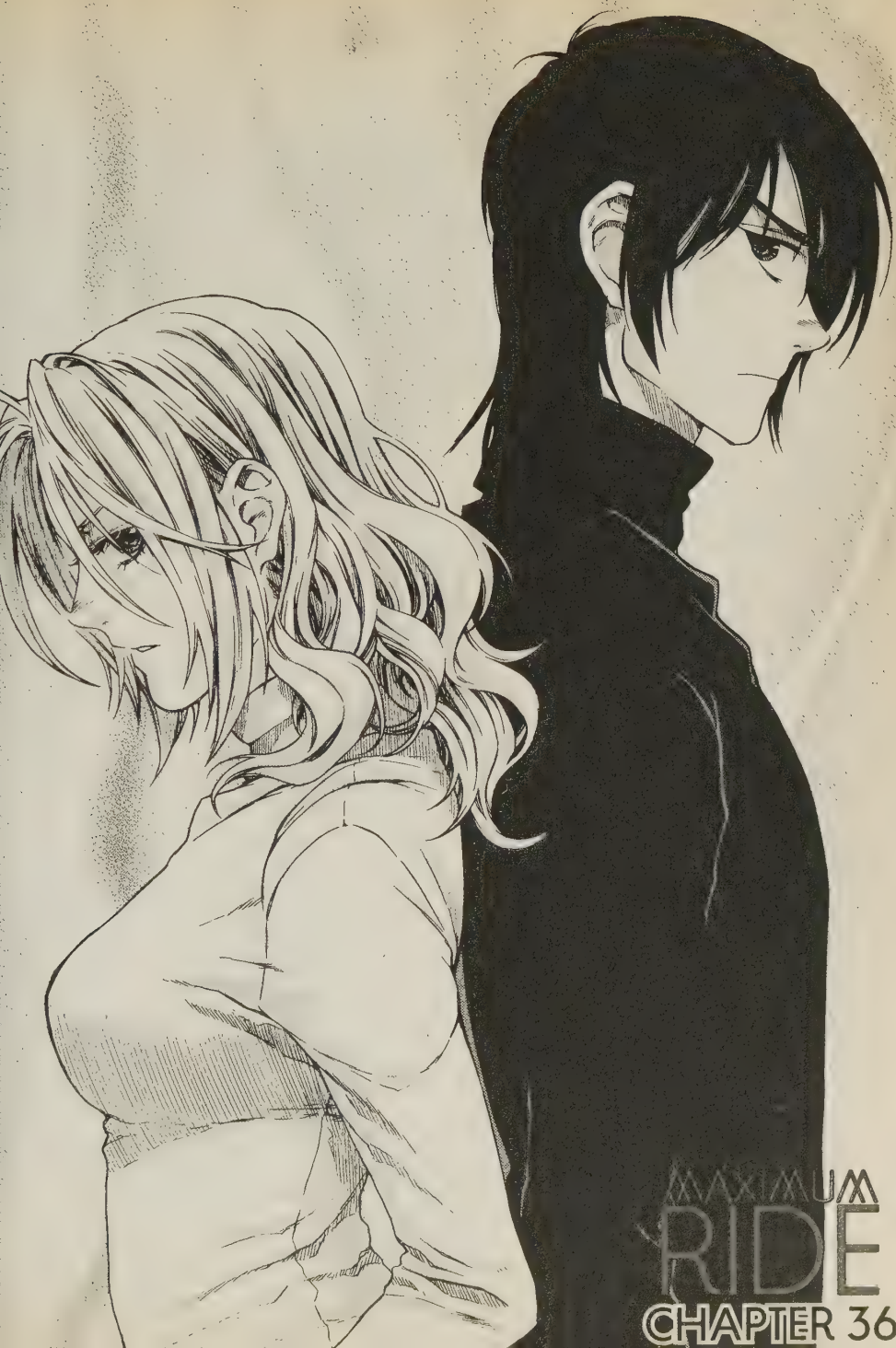


THE
BIGGEST
INFORMATION-
DISSEMINATION
SYSTEM IN
THE WORLD.

PEOPLE
MAGAZINE.

MAXIMUM
RIDE





MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 36

L.A., VENICE BEACH



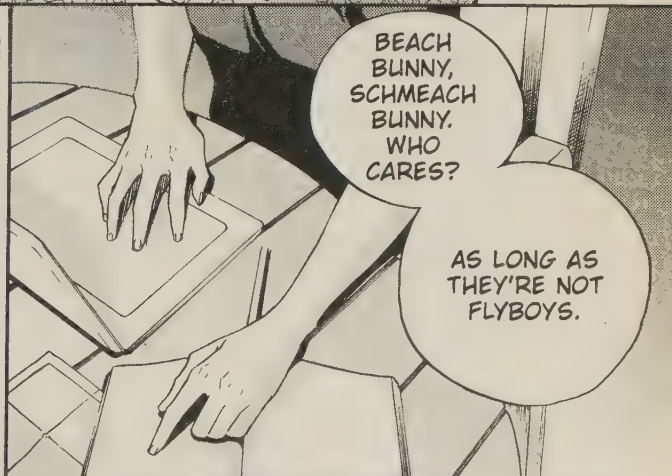
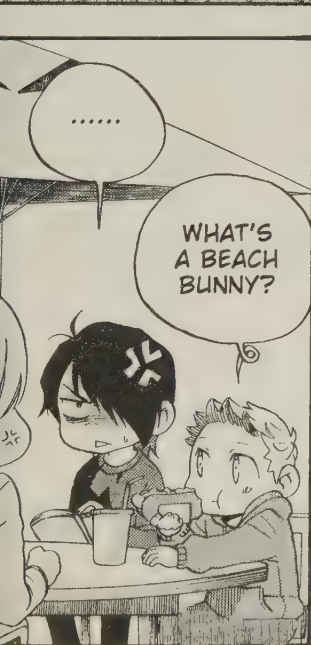
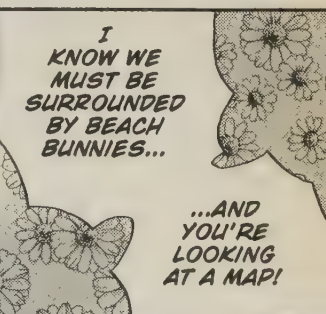
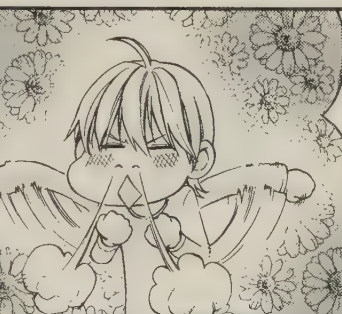
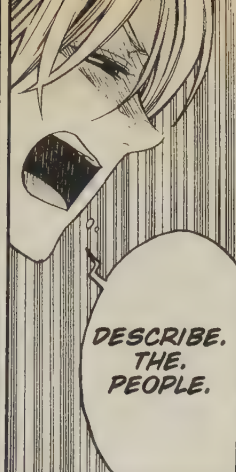
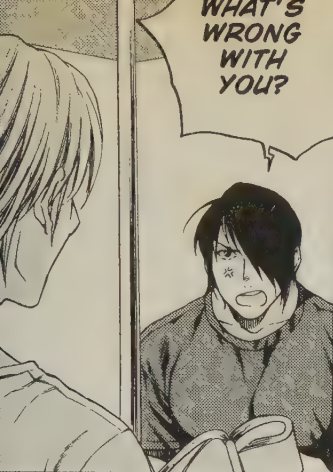
I HATE
YOU!
YOU'RE
SUCH
LOSERS!

KICK

YOU'RE
JUST
BEING
JERKS.

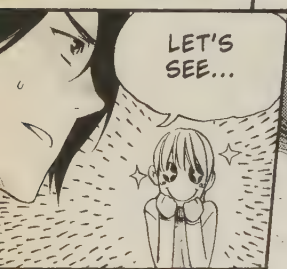
OWW!





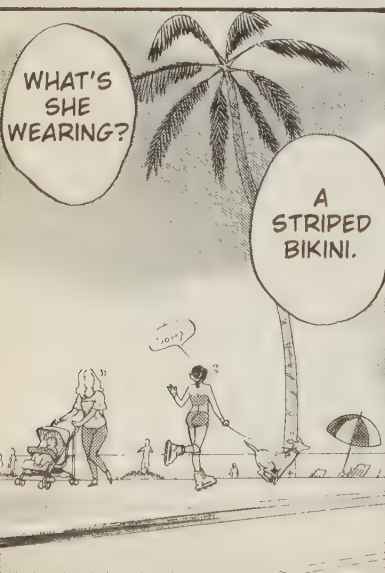
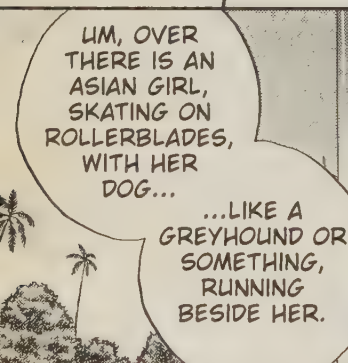


THERE ARE TWO GIRLS OVER THERE.



ONE'S IN A WHITE BIKINI. ONE HAS "UTOPIA" WRITTEN ACROSS HER BUTT.

THEY HAVE BIG, BLOND HAIR.

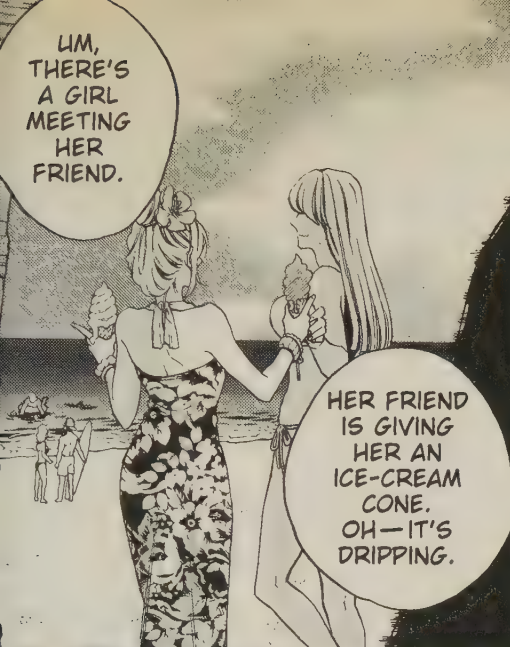


AND KNEE GUARDS.

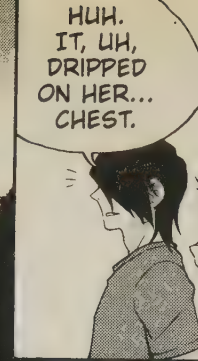
OH, MAN. MORE, MORE.

MAX WOULD HAVE BEEN ALL OVER HIM LIKE UGLY ON AN APE, TELLING HIM WHAT A SEXIST PIG HE WAS.



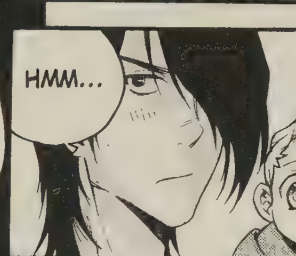


UM,
THERE'S
A GIRL
MEETING
HER
FRIEND.



HUH.
IT, UH,
DRIPPED
ON HER...
CHEST.

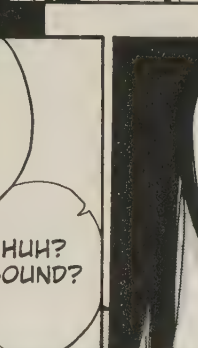
HMPH!



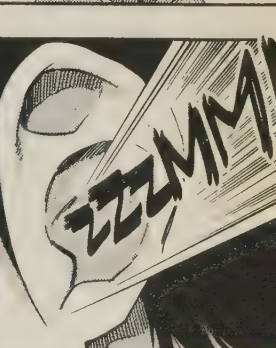
IT'S
GONNA
STAIN FOR
SURE.



HER FRIEND
IS GIVING
HER AN
ICE-CREAM
CONE.
OH—IT'S
DRIPPING.



HMM...

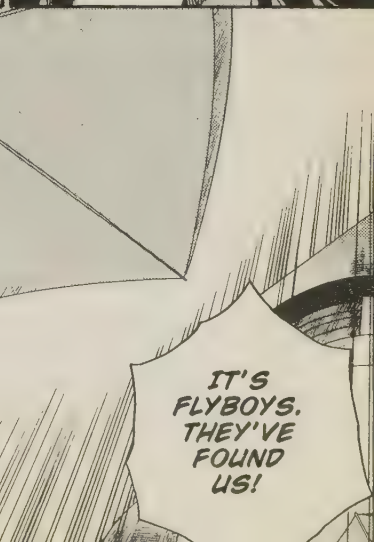


THAT'S
CHOCO-
LATE.



WHAT'S
THAT
SOUND,
FANG?

HUH?
SOUND?



ZZZZMM

UP AND
AWAY!

IT'S
FLYBOYS.
THEY'VE
FOUND
US!

Busted-up Hollywood

So, for those of you in the LA area, I need to fess up about the major wreckage over at the big Hollywood sign. A million hopefuls have fixated on that sign as a symbol of future movie careers, and I sure do apologize about it being destroyed. But it wasn't my fault.

The Gasman, Iggy, and I were minding our own business somewhere in the greater LA area (which extends from Tijuana up to Pismo Beach), and suddenly, out of nowhere, a couple hundred Flyboys dropped down on us. How did they know where we were? I always assumed they tracked us either by Max's chip or by Angel's dog.

Which, as you've probably heard, are with us no longer.

So how'd they know where to find us?

Unless one of us three is telling them?

Which is impossible, of course. Anyway, like I told you before, Max saw thousands of Flyboys back at the School, hanging in rows, charging up.

So today they let a bunch of 'em go for a test-drive.

I have to tell you people, those things are fast. They're strong. They can go for a long time without stopping. But smart? Not so much.

Gaz, Iggy, and I shot up, fast, from where we'd been innocently hanging out. We're always better off in the air. Of course jaws dropped, eyes popped, small children screamed, etc., when we suddenly whipped out wings and took flight. I guess we're unusual even for LA.

The three of us against a couple hundred Flyboys?

I don't think so. Sure, maybe sixty, or even eighty, no problem. But not two hundred. Not even if Max were there. Well, okay, maybe if Max were there. Maybe the two hundred. But she wasn't there.

Anyway, Gaz, Iggy, and I instinctively implemented a tried-and-true plan of action, Plan Delta, which we've used any number of times and have down to an art. Basically it means "run like hell." Or rather, "fly like hell."

We flew. We zipped out of there like lightning. The Flyboys don't seem to have altitude problems — they followed us easily up into 747 cruising altitude, where even I was getting a little short of breath. Like the Erasers, they're not too nimble, but they're wicked fast and scarily strong.

One of Iggy's newest explosives took out about fifty of them, and sorry to all those folks showered by bits of Flyboy metal and flesh matrix down at that MTV party on the beach. The rest of them tore after us, and we couldn't outrun them.

Then I saw the Hollywood Hills. We flew right for the sign and, at the very, very last second, screamed into a direct vertical climb. I mean, my belt buckle scraped one of the letters. But the three of us made it, shooting straight up like rockets.

The Flyboys were not so fortunate.

One after another, they plowed right into the sign, setting off electrical charges that shorted them out and made quite a few of them explode like metallic, furry popcorn. And if you think that's a gross description, be glad you weren't there, being pelted by the little pieces. I think only about six or seven of them managed to avoid the carnage, and I have no idea what happened to them.

After we'd busted our sides laughing, we blew out of there, and now we're hiding. Again.

Us: roughly 200. Hard to tell with all the parts flying.

Them: 0

Take that, you whitecoat schmucks. Now you owe California a new Hollywood sign.

— Fang, somewhere in the West



Fang

Today's date:
Already Too
Late!

Visitor number
972,361,007

108 comments ▼

Kewl dude 326 said . . .

O man Fang thats so awesome, i mean when u guys popped all the flyboys. i woulda been bustin my gut 2. Keep flyin, man.

San Diego 11:51 AM

Sugargrrl said . . .

Dear Fang, I'm so glad your alright. I hate those flyboys and hope they all crash and burn. If u need a place to stay in Roanoke, Virginia, just e-mail me.

12:14 PM

Heather said . . .

We should all make posses and search everywhere for labs and Schools and stuff! There are millions and millions of kids in the world, and we can fix what the grown-ups have polluted and destroyed! Landfills and oil slicks and endangered species and wiping out forests and driving gas hogs and not caring about the environment and not caring about animals! Their time of destroying everything is over! It's time for Green Kids to unite!

Heather Schmidt

President, GreenKidsforaGreenerPlanet.org

12:57 PM

Streetfightr said . . .

Us kidz got 2 take over! De groneups hav recked everything! Dere destroyin r whole planet! De kidz shuld run everything! Dey want us 2 b quiet! We won't b quiet no more!

Brooklyn 1:20 PM

Chen Wei said . . .

Fang, I was wondering: do u have a girlfriend? Hong Kong P.S. I am 15 years old but look younger.

2:40 PM

Carlos said . . .

I say we burn all the science labs! Make all the grown-ups into slaves!

Texas 3:07 PM

Anonymous said . . .

Carlos, no, that's stupid. We need science. Science isn't bad by itself. It's just bad when bad people use it to do bad things. We can do good things with science. Like feed the world. I don't want to make all grown-ups slaves. My parents are grown-ups, but they're all right.

Concerned Future Scientist

Louisiana 4:21 PM

Adide said . . .

I am afraid the grown-ups are going to destroy our planet. I want them to stop. I wish they would use science to make better crops and make more rain. Instead of bombs, they should make more schoolbooks for children.

Uganda 4:26 PM

Dita said . . .

I can't believe you and Max split up! You guys should stick together! Now I'm even more worried about all of you! Be extra careful!

Mumbai 6:08 PM

Sean said . . .

Fang, I want to be a bird kid. I don't care what it takes. I would go through anything to be able to fly and be with the flock. Tell me where to meet you. I want to join you today.

Manchester, England 6:35 PM

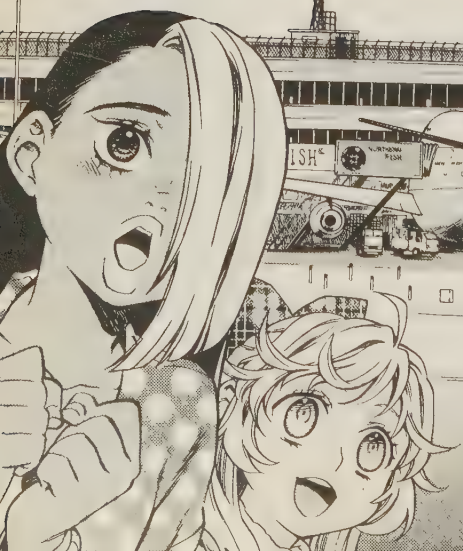
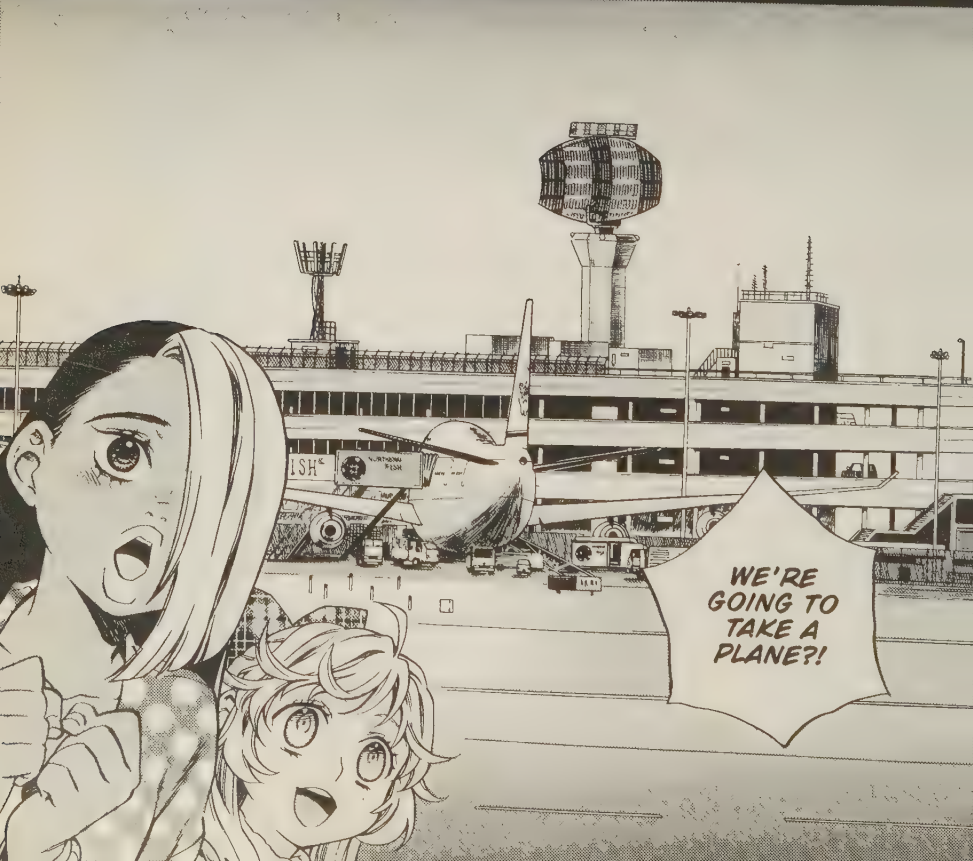
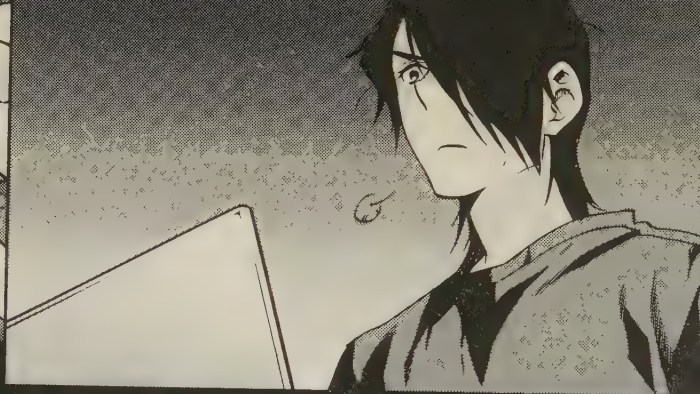
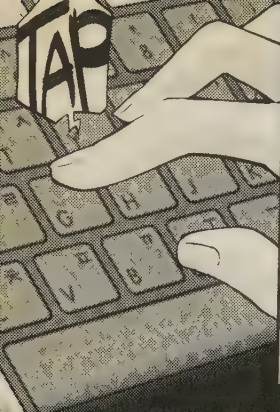


Fang

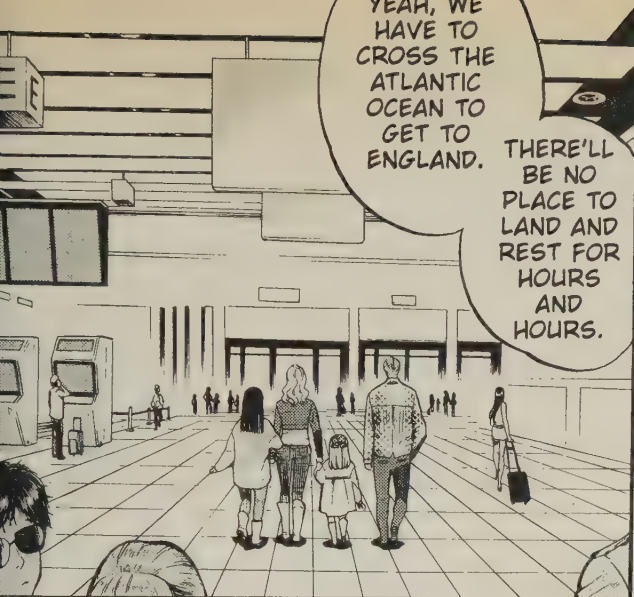
**Today's date:
Already Too
Late!**

Visitor number

972,361,007

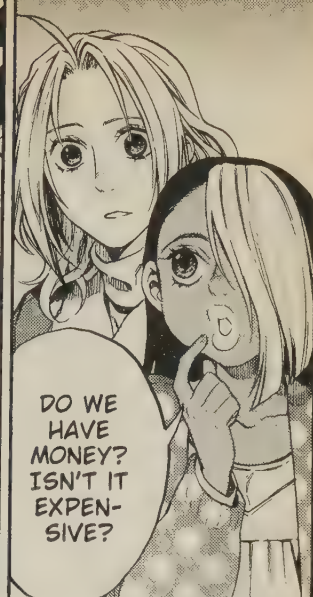


WE'RE
GOING TO
TAKE A
PLANE?!

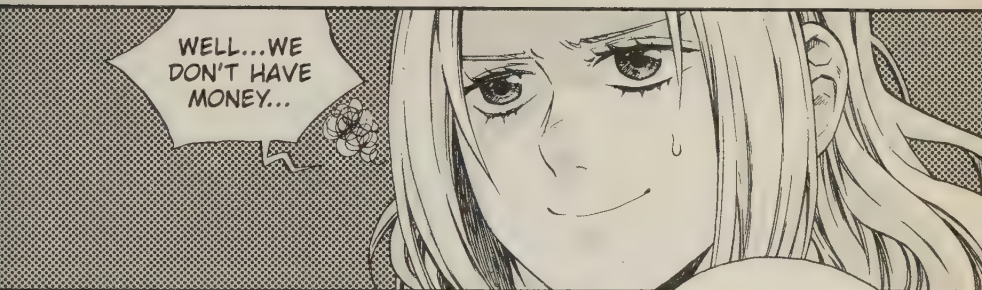


YEAH, WE
HAVE TO
CROSS THE
ATLANTIC
OCEAN TO
GET TO
ENGLAND.

THERE'LL
BE NO
PLACE TO
LAND AND
REST FOR
HOURS
AND
HOURS.



DO WE
HAVE
MONEY?
ISN'T IT
EXPEN-
SIVE?



WELL...WE
DON'T HAVE
MONEY...



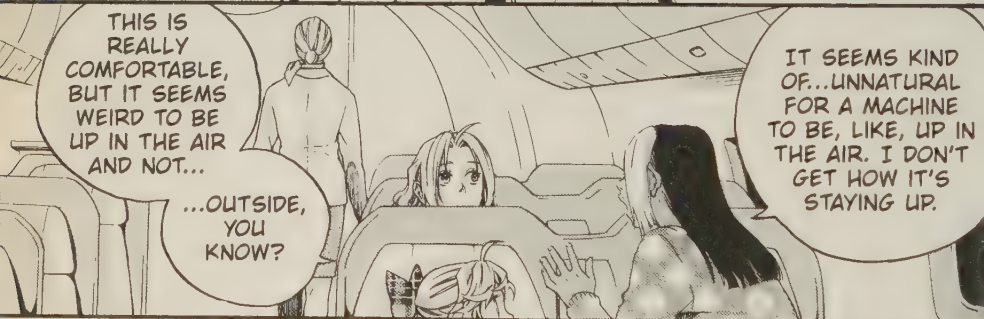
HMM?

...BUT WE
DO HAVE A
WAY...



YOU CAN
GO NOW.

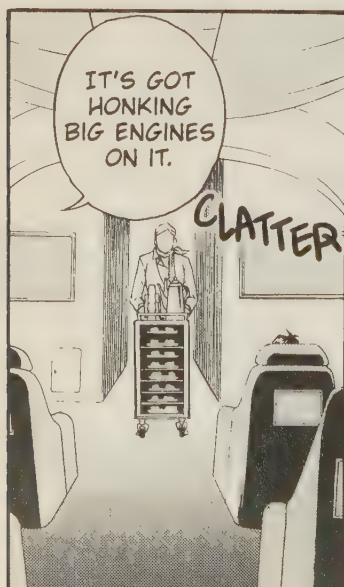
AH...YES...
HAVE A
PLEASANT
FLIGHT...



THIS IS
REALLY
COMFORTABLE,
BUT IT SEEMS
WEIRD TO BE
UP IN THE AIR
AND NOT...

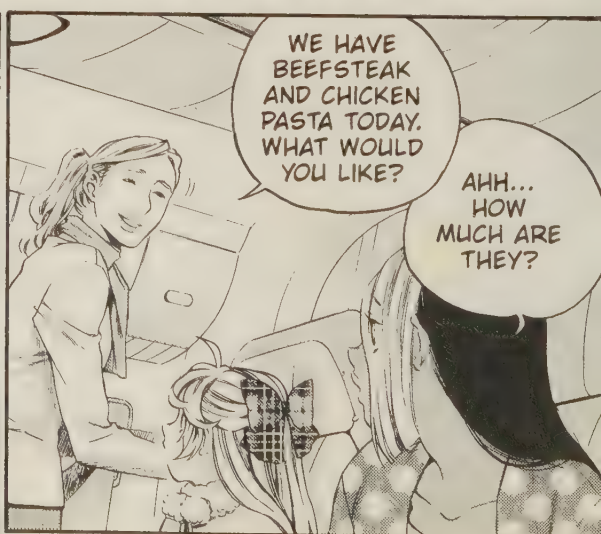
...OUTSIDE,
YOU
KNOW?

IT SEEMS KIND
OF...UNNATURAL
FOR A MACHINE
TO BE, LIKE, UP
IN THE AIR. I DON'T
GET HOW IT'S
STAYING UP.



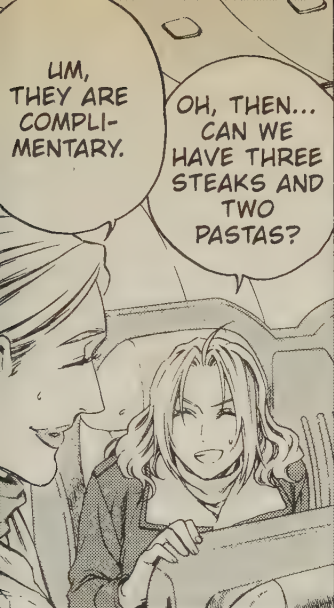
IT'S GOT
HONKING
BIG ENGINES
ON IT.

CLATTER



WE HAVE
BEEFSTEAK
AND CHICKEN
PASTA TODAY.
WHAT WOULD
YOU LIKE?

AHH...
HOW
MUCH ARE
THEY?



UM,
THEY ARE
COMPLI-
MENTARY.

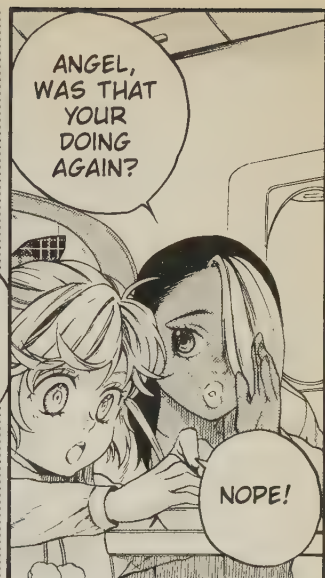
OH, THEN...
CAN WE
HAVE THREE
STEAKS AND
TWO
PASTAS?



HERE
YOU GO.
ENJOY
YOUR
MEAL.

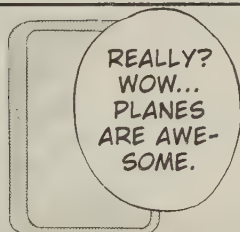
THANK
YOU!

PLEASE
LET US
KNOW IF
YOU NEED
ANYTHING
ELSE.

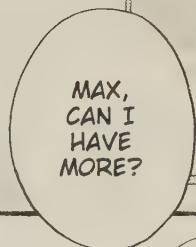


ANGEL,
WAS THAT
YOUR
DOING
AGAIN?

NOPE!



REALLY?
WOW...
PLANES
ARE AWE-
SOME.



MAX,
CAN I
HAVE
MORE?



SURE
THING.



LONDON,
HEATHROW AIRPORT

OKAY!

THE FIRST
THING WE
SHOULD DO
IS FIND AN
INTERNET
CAFÉ, GET
ON THE
WEB...

...AND
GOOGLE ITEX
IN ENGLAND.
EVEN IF WE
DON'T FIND
THEM BY NAME,
WE'LL SEE
OTHER LINKS
THAT CAN
HELP US.

WHOA,
WHOA.
ARE YOU
TELLING
ME...
...WE'RE
NOT GOING
TO GO SEE
THE CROWN
JEWELS?

Buckingham
Palace!!

AND THE
TOWER OF
LONDON?

OOH, LOOK —
MADAME
TUSSAUDS!
WE'VE GOT TO
GO THERE!

ITEX
PROBABLY
HAS ITS MAIN
OFFICES
IN THE
SUBURBS...

...NOT
RIGHT IN
THE CITY.

MAX...

...PLEASE?

WHOA.

**YOU KNOW,
WHEN YOU'RE
RIGHT, THAT'S
ALL YOU GET
TO BE.**

.....

**YES, YOU
SHOULD
PURSUE YOUR
MISSION...**

**...BUT YOU HAVEN'T
LEARNED HOW TO
BALANCE YOUR
LEADERSHIP. YOU
HAVE TO LEAD, BUT
YOU MUST ALSO
LISTEN.**

**AND JUST
LET THEM DO
WHATEVER
THEY WANT?**

**MAX,
THEY'RE
CHILDREN.
THEY'RE JUST
ALONG FOR
THE RIDE.**

**DOES
YOUR HEAD
HURT?**

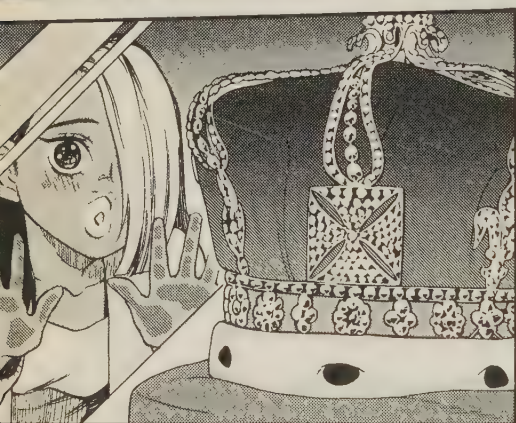
MAX?

**A
STRONG
LEADER CAN
BEND SOME-
TIMES.**

**FINE. WE'LL
TAKE A TOUR, HIT
THE HOT SPOTS.
ANGEL, GET US
ON ONE OF THOSE
DOUBLE-DECKER
BUS TOUR
THINGS.**

YAAAY!

**THEY'RE
NOT JUST
ALONG FOR
THE RIDE,
BUT...**





THE
IMPERIAL
STATE CROWN.
GOLLY. I
WOULD LOVE
TO HAVE A
CROWN LIKE
THAT.

THOSE
AREN'T
THE REAL
JEWELS.

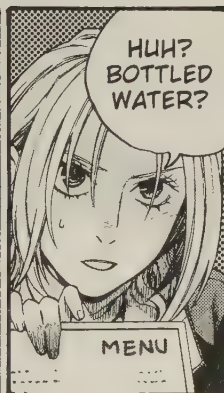
IT SAID
THEY'RE
REAL
ON THE
PLACARD.

WHAT
DO YOU
WANT TO
EAT?

ARI?

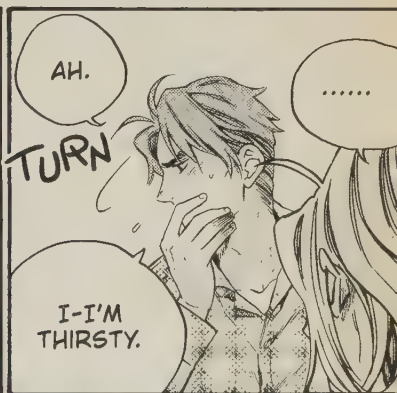


TH-THIS?



HUH?
BOTTLED
WATER?

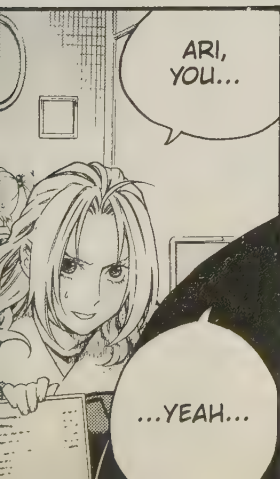
MENU



AH.

TURN

I-I'M
THIRSTY.



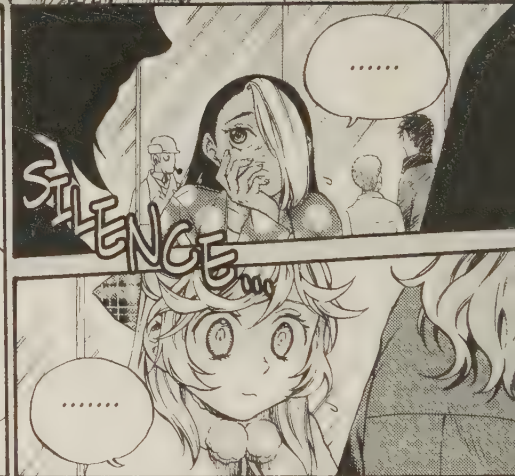
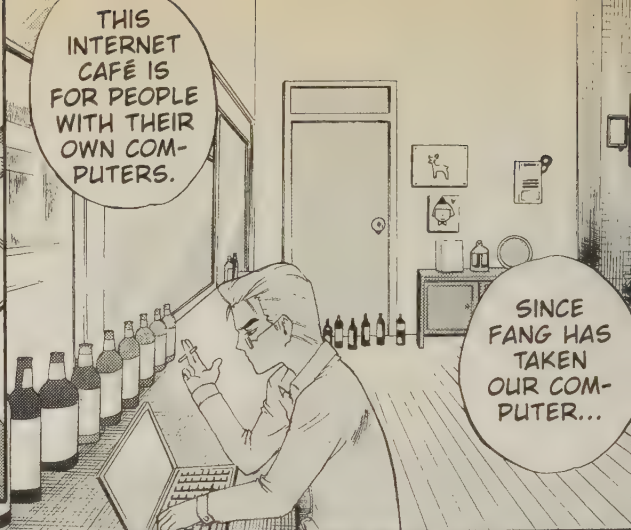
ARI,
YOU...

...YEAH...

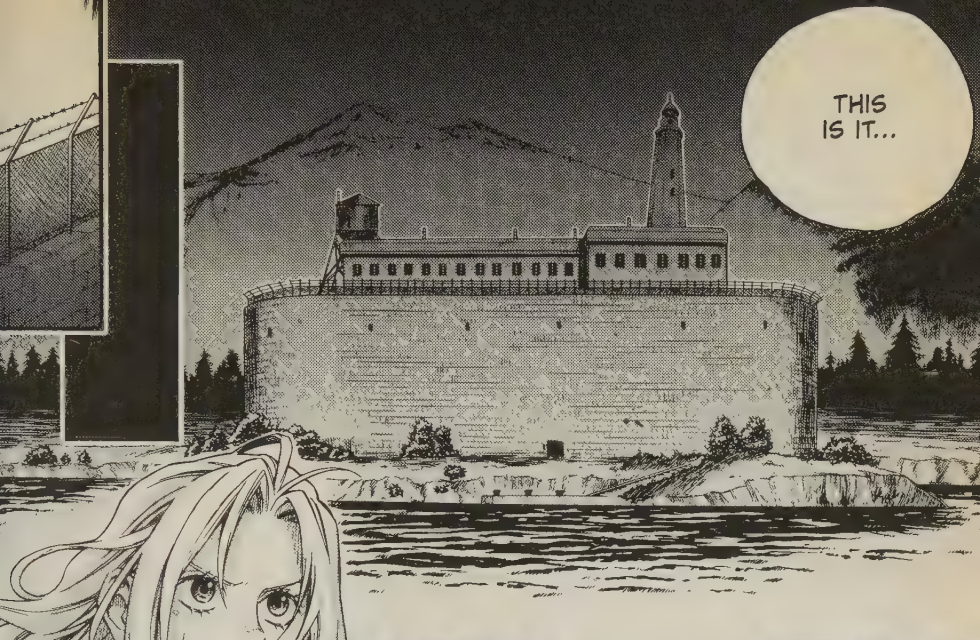


I CAN'T
READ.

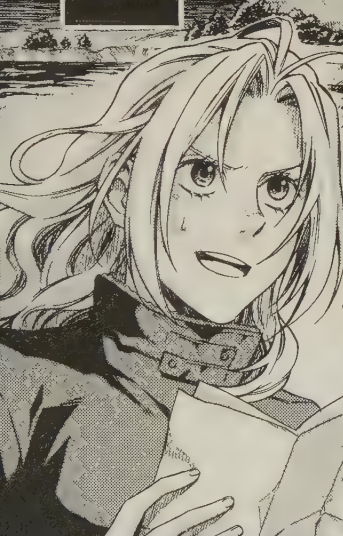
JUST ORDER
ANYTHING
FOR ME



FANG...
JERK. CRETIN.
OH GOD...HOW
COULD HE HAVE
DONE THIS?

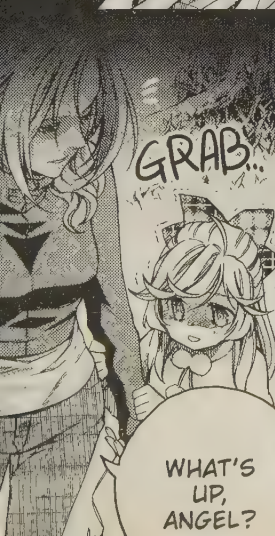


THIS
IS IT...



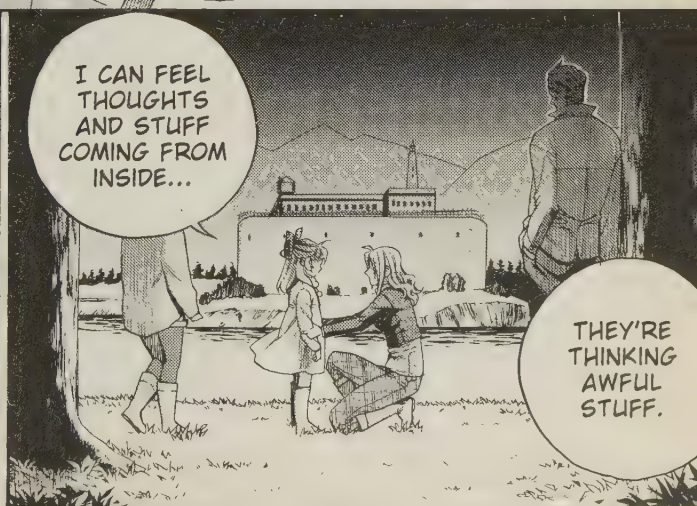
IT
LOOKS SO
DEPRESS-
ING.

GEEZ,
THEY'RE
NOT EVEN
PRETENDING
TO GUSSY
THIS PLACE
UP, ARE
THEY?



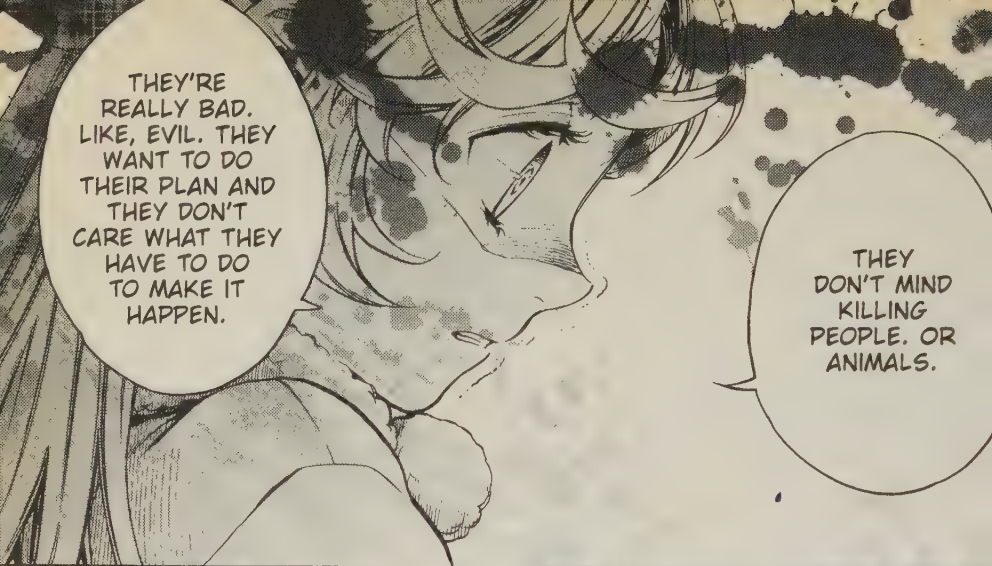
GRAB...

WHAT'S
UP,
ANGEL?



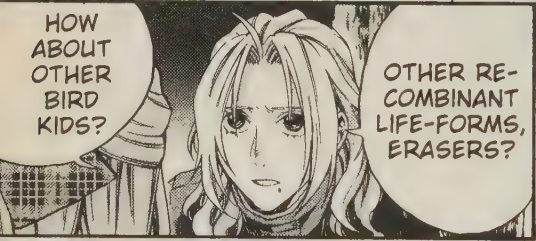
I CAN FEEL
THOUGHTS
AND STUFF
COMING FROM
INSIDE...

THEY'RE
THINKING
AWFUL
STUFF.



THEY'RE
REALLY BAD.
LIKE, EVIL. THEY
WANT TO DO
THEIR PLAN AND
THEY DON'T
CARE WHAT THEY
HAVE TO DO
TO MAKE IT
HAPPEN.

THEY
DON'T MIND
KILLING
PEOPLE. OR
ANIMALS.

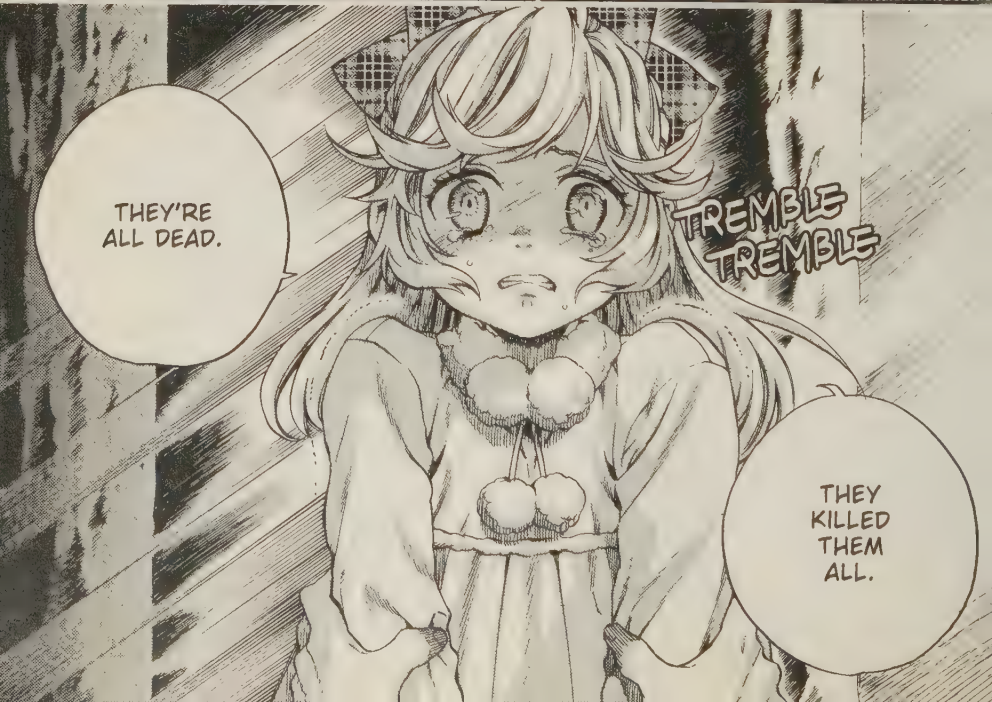


HOW
ABOUT
OTHER
BIRD
KIDS?

OTHER RE-
COMBINANT
LIFE-FORMS,
ERASERS?



SHAK
SHAK



THEY'RE
ALL DEAD.

TREMBLE
TREMBLE

THEY
KILLED
THEM
ALL.

ERIT

DO WE
REALLY
HAVE TO
GO IN
THERE?

'CAUSE,
I MEAN, IF
WE DON'T
ACTUALLY
HAVE TO,
THEN I'D
RATHER
NOT.

YOU AND
ME BOTH,
KID.

BUT I HAVE
THIS WHOLE
SAVING-THE-
WORLD
GIG...

...AND I
KIND OF
HAVE TO
DO THIS.
YOU WITH
ME?

REMEMBER
THE HYDRA,
MAX?

THE LERNAEAN
HYDRA, ONE
OF THE LABORS
OF HERACLES.
EVERY TIME
HERACLES CUT
OFF A HEAD...

WHAT NOW,
VOICE?

...TWO
GREW
BACK IN
ITS
PLACE.

OH.
THAT. I
SAW A CAR-
TOON ABOUT
IT ONCE. WHAT
ABOUT IT?

THINK IT THROUGH, MAX. IT'LL COME TO YOU.

WOULD IT KILL YOU TO JUST COME OUT AND TELL ME?

MAX?

I REMEMBER THE CARTOON—A BIG MUSCULAR MOUSE DRESSED IN A LION SKIN WAS TRYING TO LOP CATLIKE HEADS OFF THIS GIANT DRAGON THING.

OH, WAIT. A HEAD GOT CUT OFF, AND TWO GREW BACK IN ITS PLACE.

ONE SEC. VOICE IMPARTING UNNECESSARY KNOWLEDGE.

URGH...

THE HYDRA ITSELF MUST BE KILLED, MAX.

THE WHOLE THING AT ONCE. THIS IS JUST ONE HEAD.

FIND THE BODY AND KILL IT.

AH! WE NEED TO CHECK OUT SOME OF THE OTHER ITEX BRANCHES, TO FIND THE HEART OF THE BEAST!

Ireland

Faeroe Is.

Norway

Sweden

Finland

Iceland

Estonia

Latvia

Lithuania

Belarus

Denmark

Poland

Germany

Czech

Slovakia

Hungary

Romania

United Kingdom

France

Belgium

Luxembourg

Switzerland

Austria

Slovenia

Yugoslavia

Bulgaria

Moldova

GOT IT
NOW,
VOICE.

SMILE

DOES
ANYONE
KNOW ANY
FRENCH?

CERRADO
AND
ABIERTO.
STUFF LIKE
THAT.

I KNOW
SOME
SPANISH.

BU
WHY

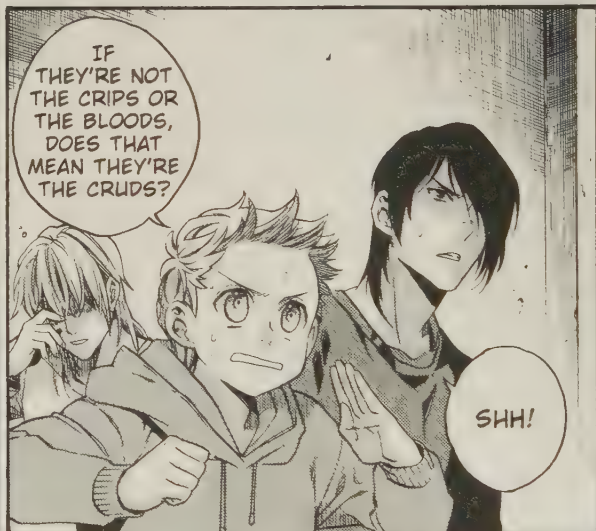
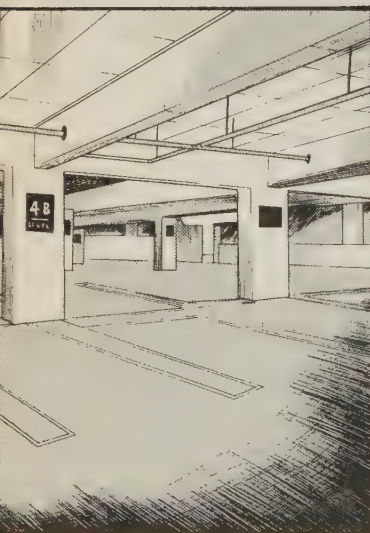
TAP

I BELIEVE
FRANCE IS
CALLING OUR
NAMES.

FWOOOOSH

FRANCE?!

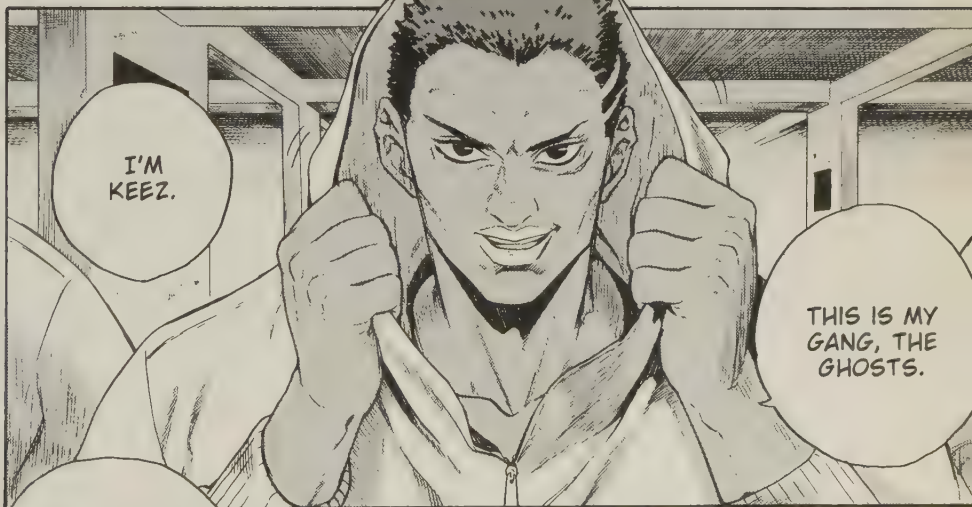
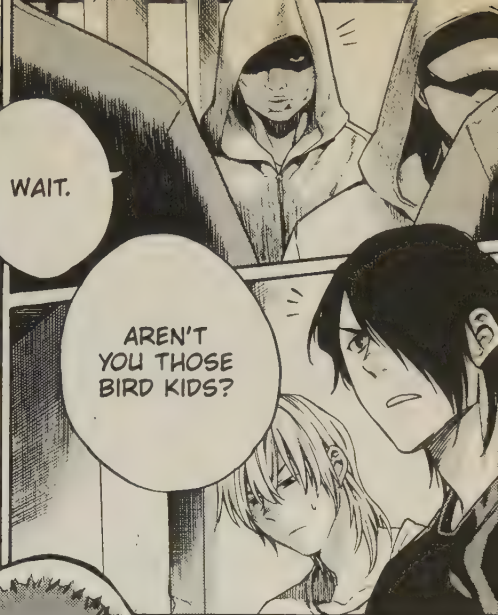
SAME TIME, L.A.





WAIT.

AREN'T
YOU THOSE
BIRD KIDS?



I'M
KEEZ.

THIS IS MY
GANG, THE
GHOSTS.

YOU, BLACK
HAIR. YOU'RE
FANG, AREN'T
YOU? I READ
YOUR BLOG.



LOOKING
FOR A SAFE
HOUSE?



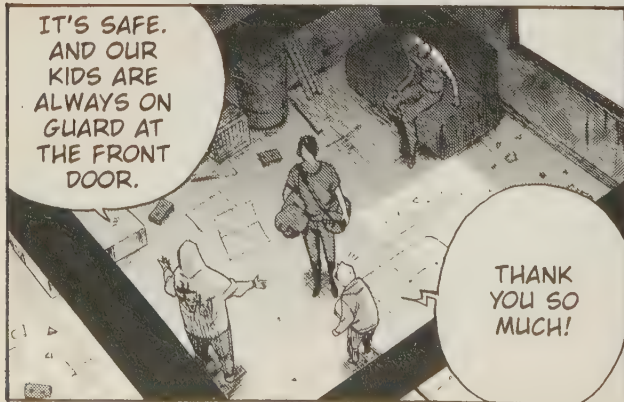
WE'RE
FANGS



CRASH
HERE.

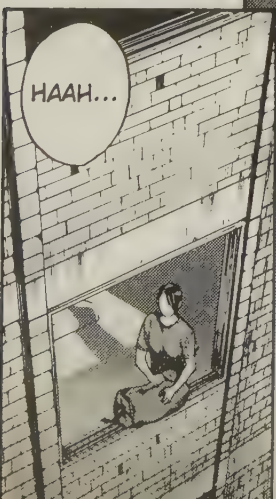
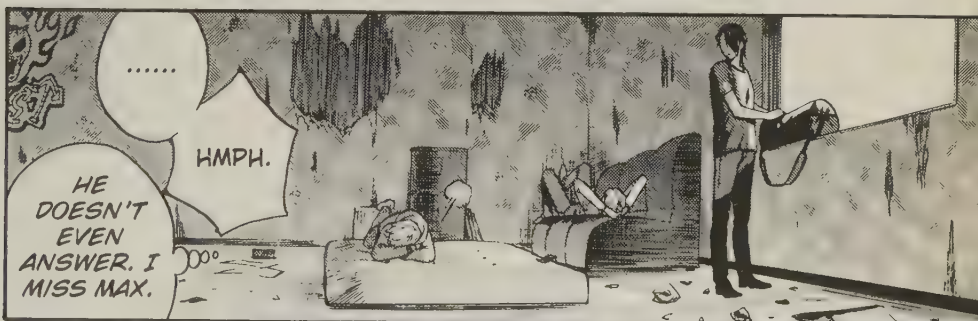
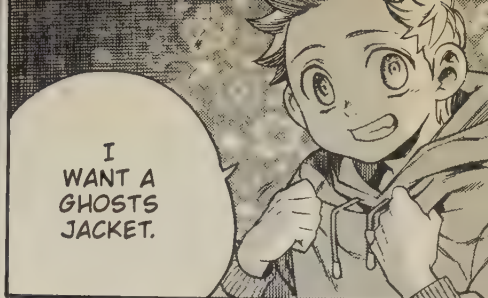


IT'S SAFE.
AND OUR
KIDS ARE
ALWAYS ON
GUARD AT
THE FRONT
DOOR.



NO
PROB.



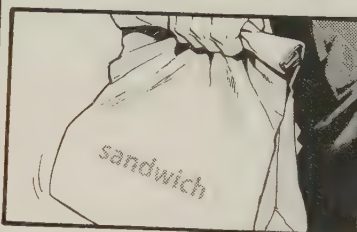
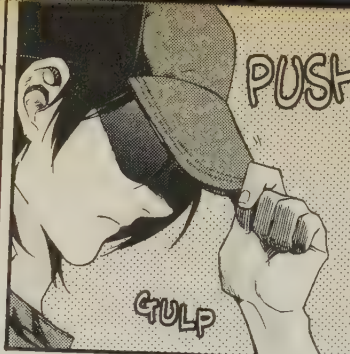




THIS IS
YOUR
PLAN?



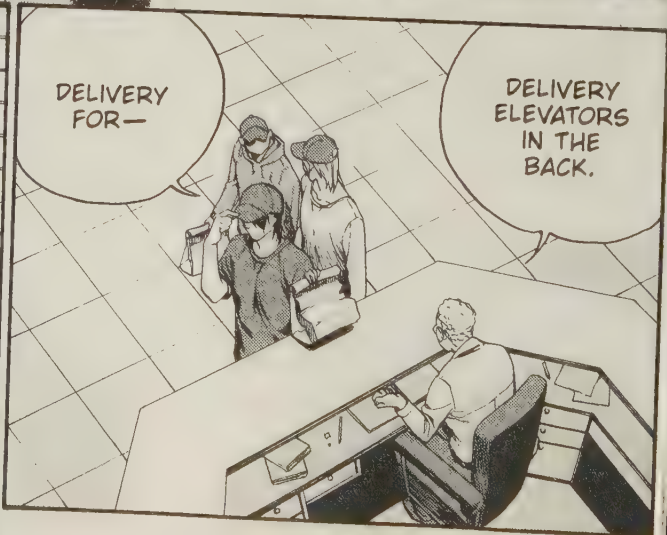
YEP.
LET'S
GIVE IT
A TRY.

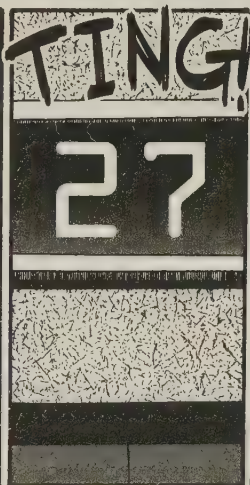
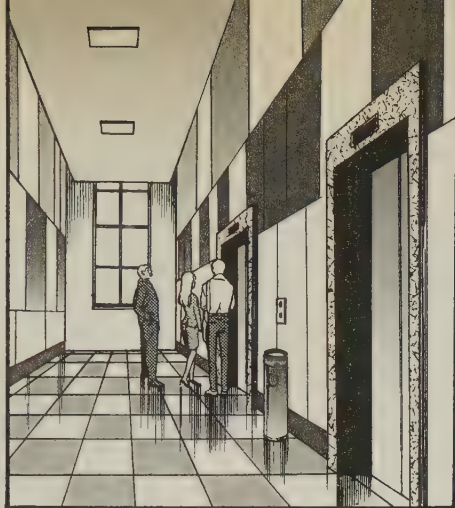


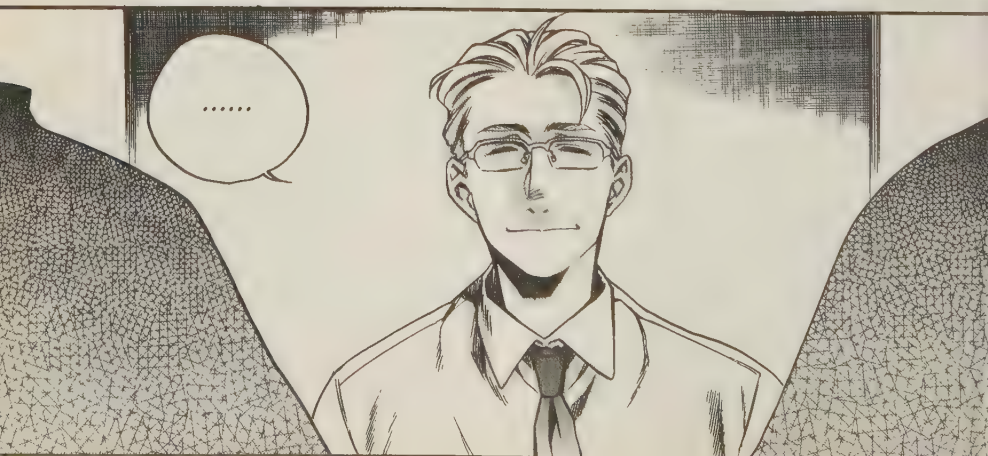
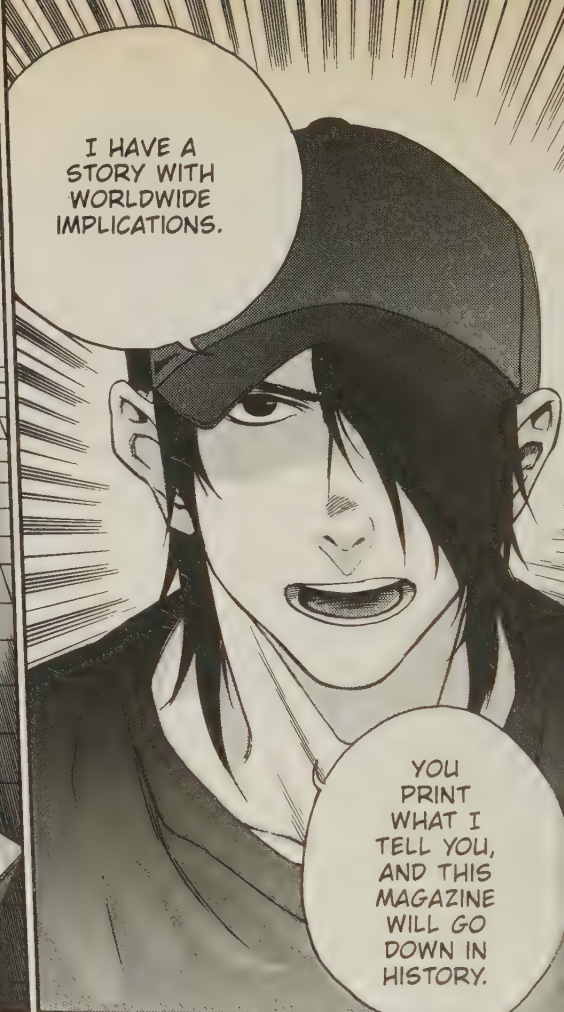
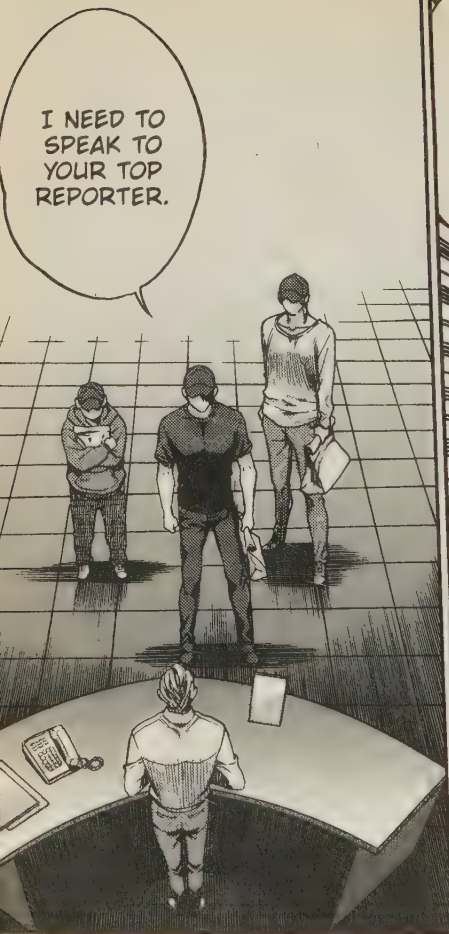
DELIVERY
FOR—



DELIVERY
ELEVATORS
IN THE
BACK.



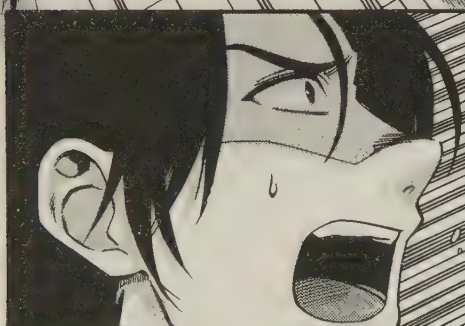
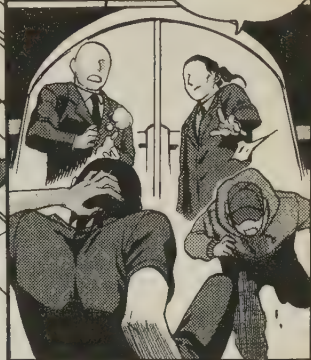






YOU
DON'T
WEIGH
NOTHIN'!

DON'T
COME
BACK!



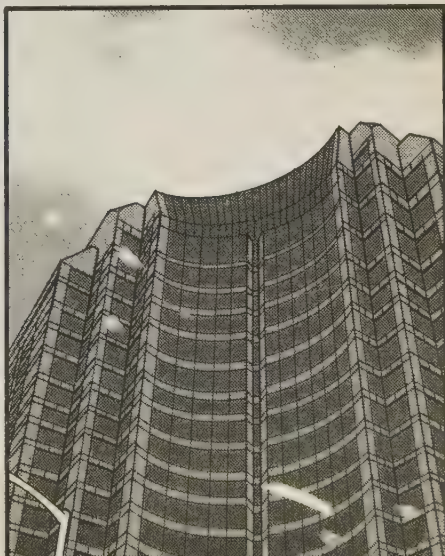
I JUST
NEED TO
SPEAK TO
SOMEONE,
ANYONE!

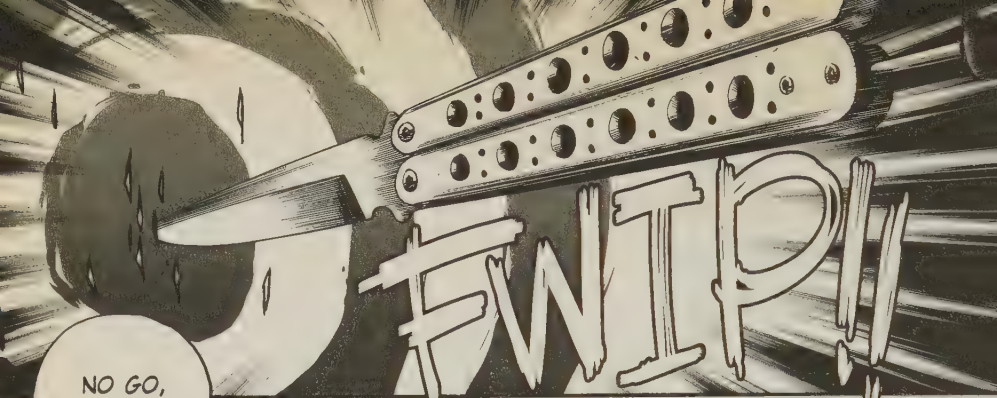


I DON'T
THINK SO.

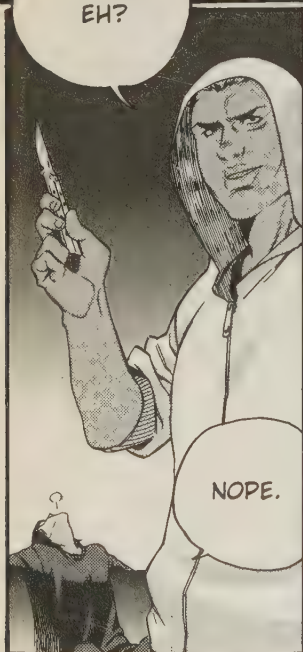


DAMN!





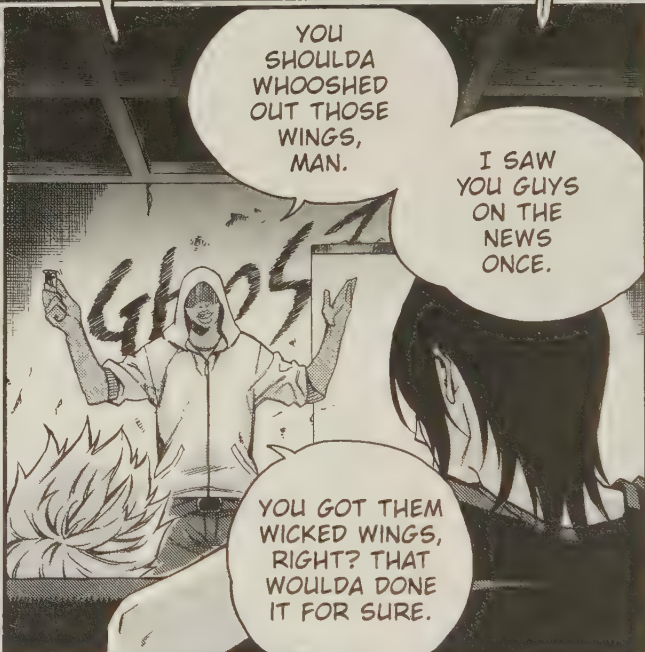
NO GO,
EH?



NOPE.

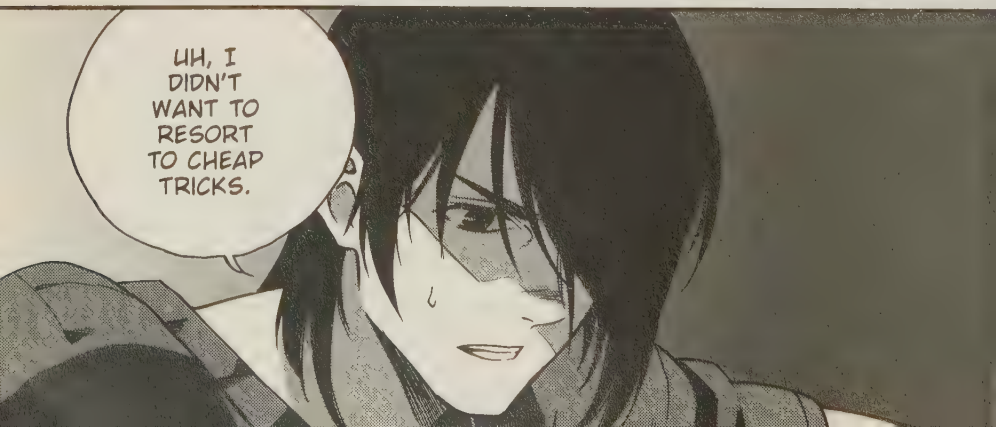
YOU
SHOULDA
WHOOSHED
OUT THOSE
WINGS,
MAN.

I SAW
YOU GUYS
ON THE
NEWS
ONCE.



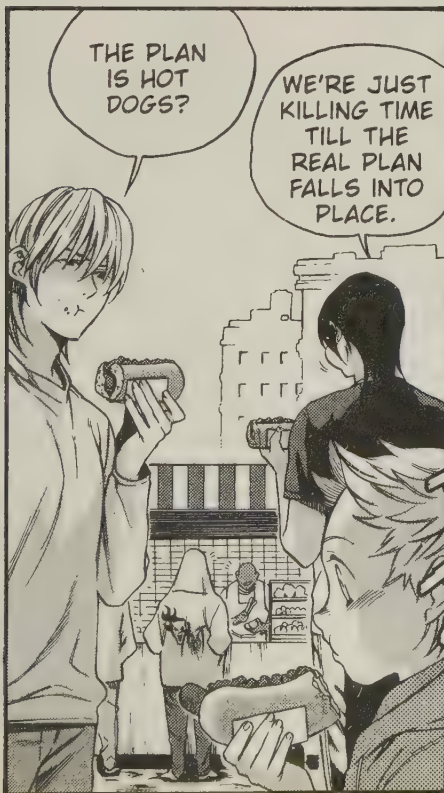
YOU GOT THEM
WICKED WINGS,
RIGHT? THAT
WOULDA DONE
IT FOR SURE.

UH, I
DIDN'T
WANT TO
RESORT
TO CHEAP
TRICKS.



I HADN'T
THOUGHT OF IT.
KEEZ IS RIGHT.

THAT WOULD
HAVE WORKED
LIKE A CHARM.
SHOOT.



FLY-
BOYS!

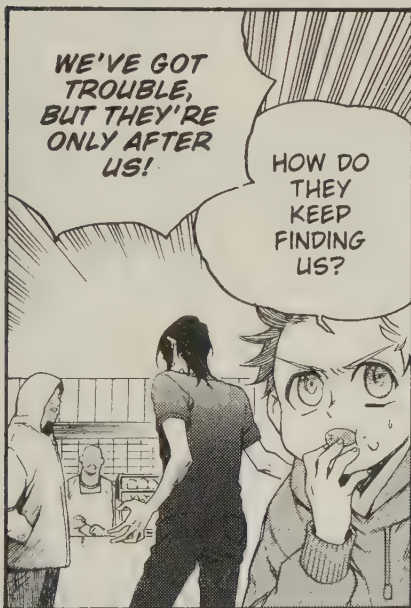
Z Z Z M M M





**YOU
GUYS
SCATTER!**

**WHAT'S
GOING
ON?**

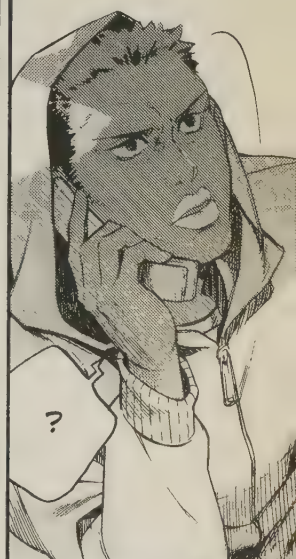


**WE'VE GOT
TROUBLE,
BUT THEY'RE
ONLY AFTER
US!**

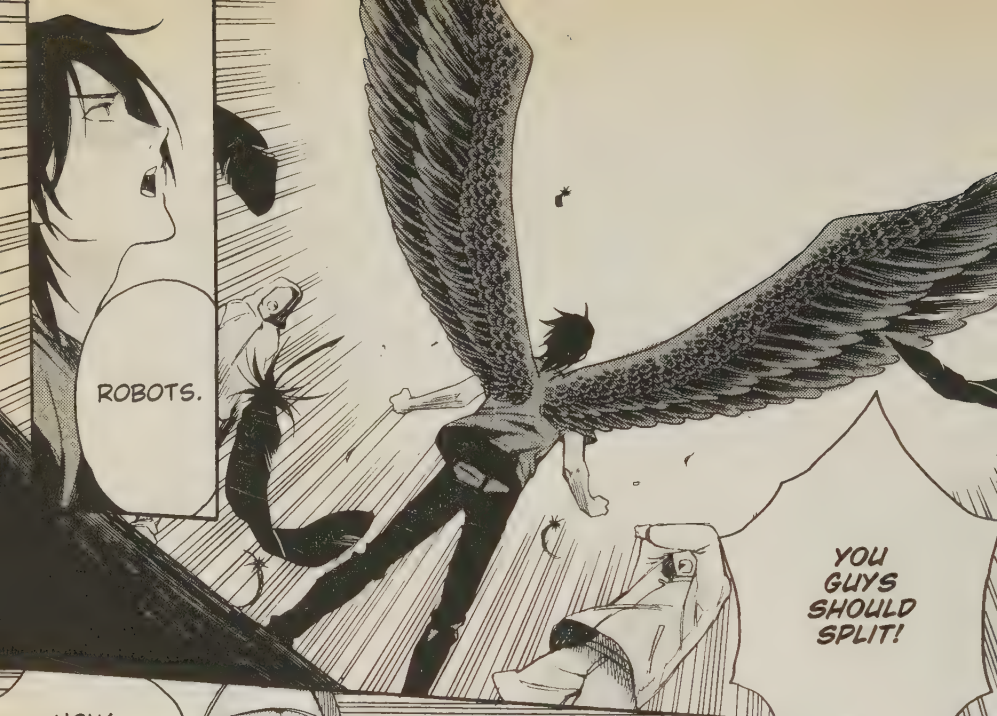
**HOW DO
THEY
KEEP
FINDING
US?**



**WE'LL
STAY!**



**WHAT THE
HECK IS
THAT?!**



ROBOTS.

YOU
GUYS
SHOULD
SPLIT!



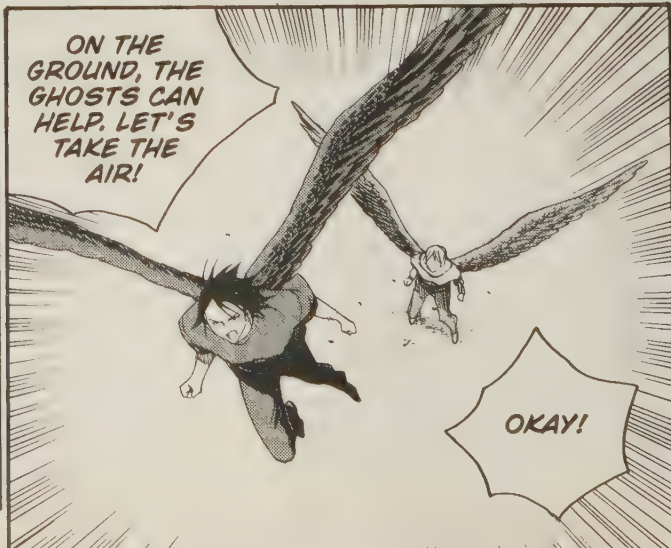
HOLY
MOTHER...

WHOA, THEY
DO HAVE
WINGS!



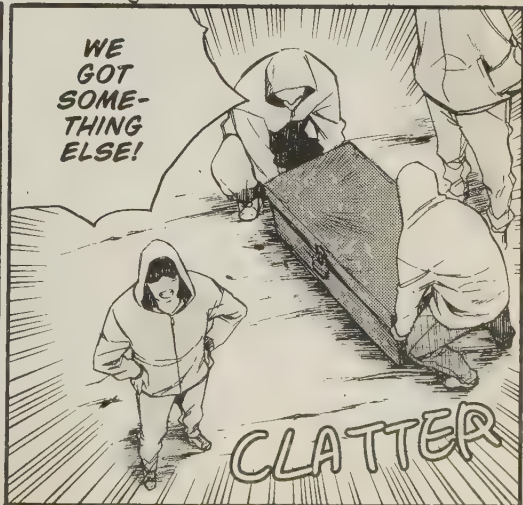
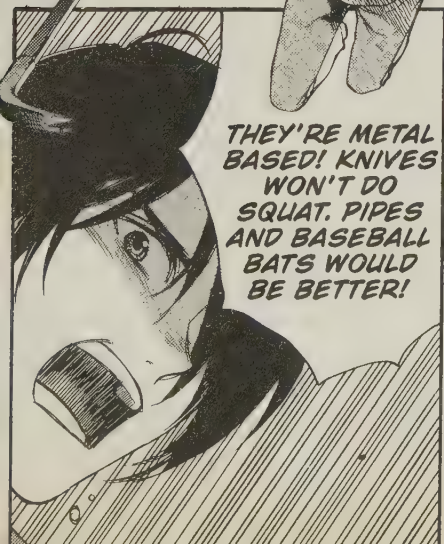
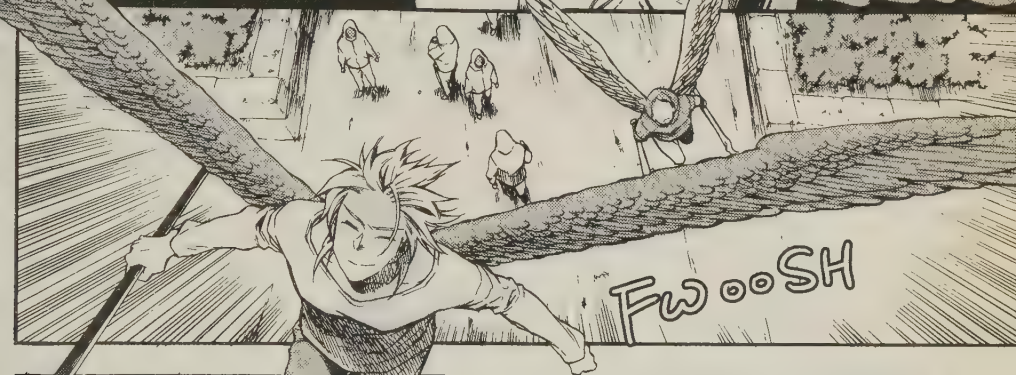
EIGHTY
FLYBOYS...

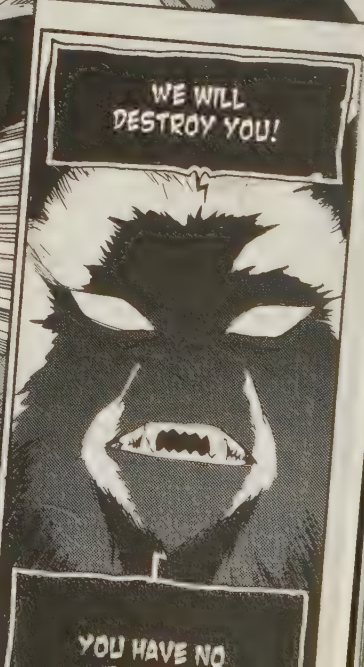
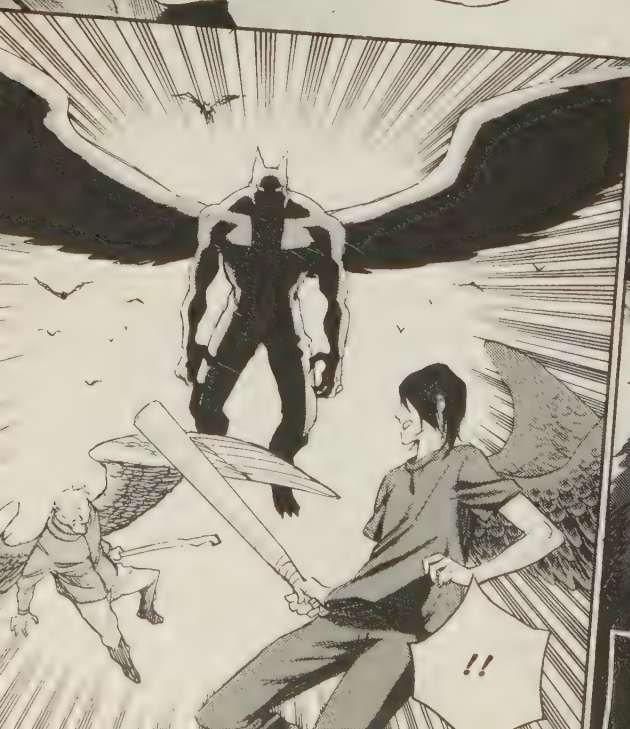
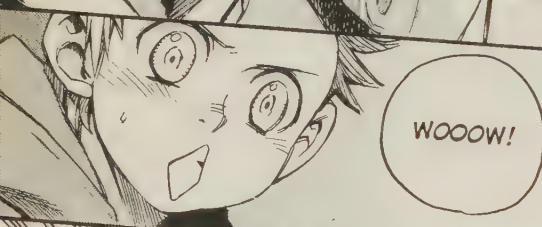
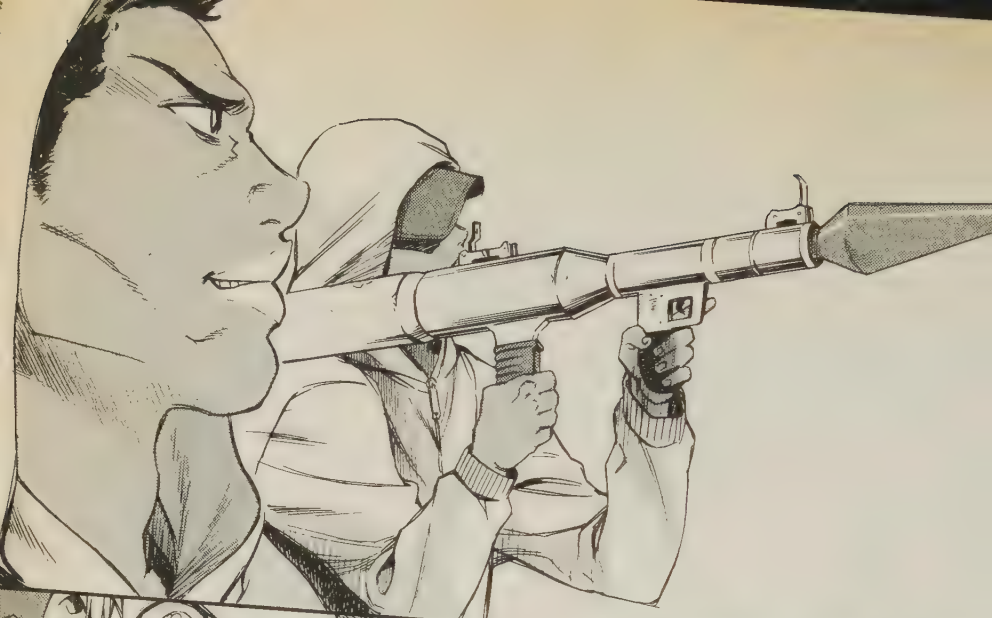
...COMING
FROM TEN
O'CLOCK.

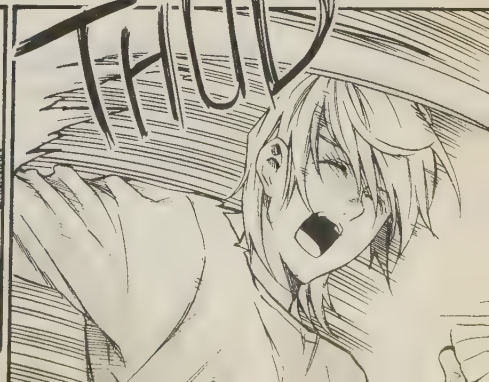
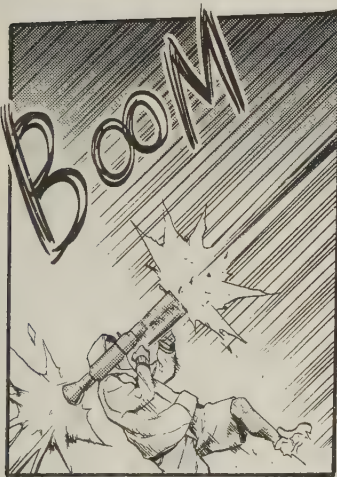
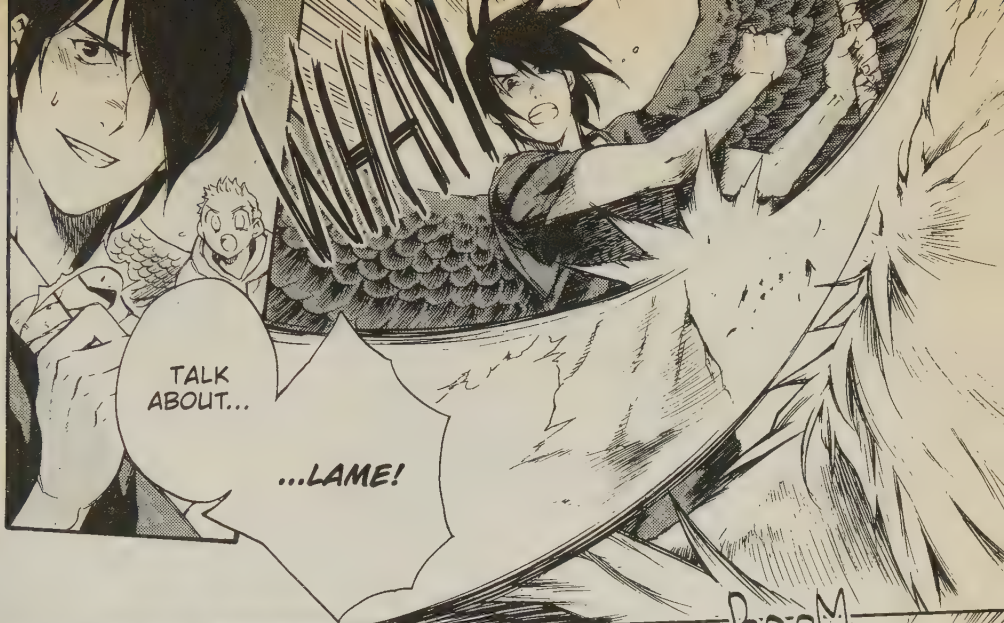


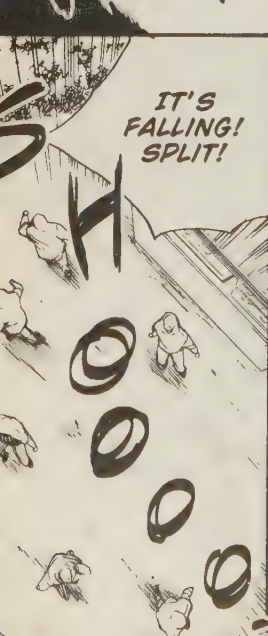
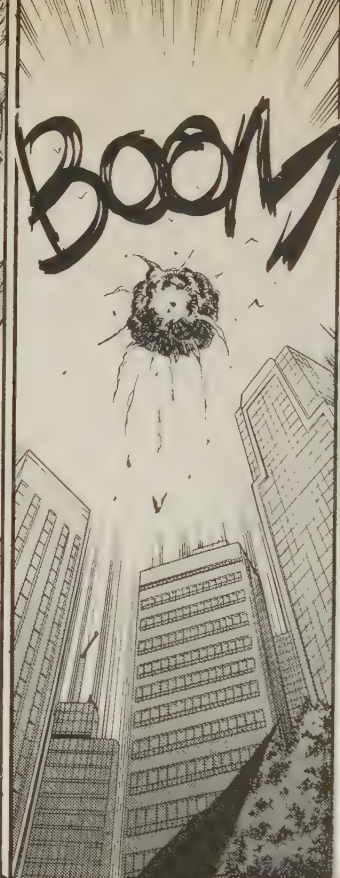
ON THE
GROUND, THE
GHOSTS CAN
HELP. LET'S
TAKE THE
AIR!

OKAY!









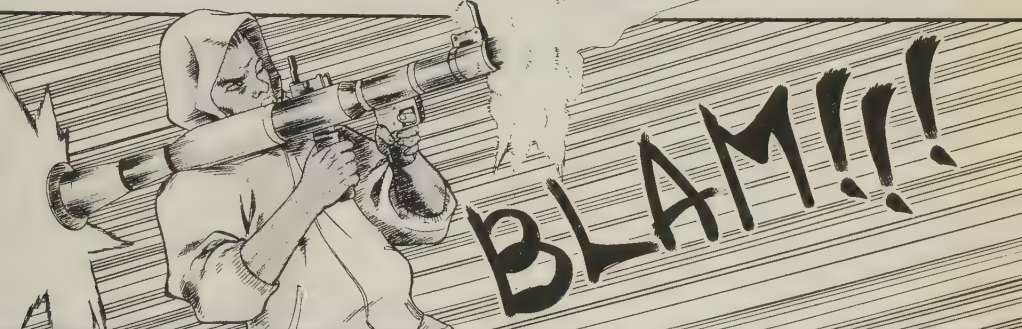
IT'S
FALLING!
SPLIT!



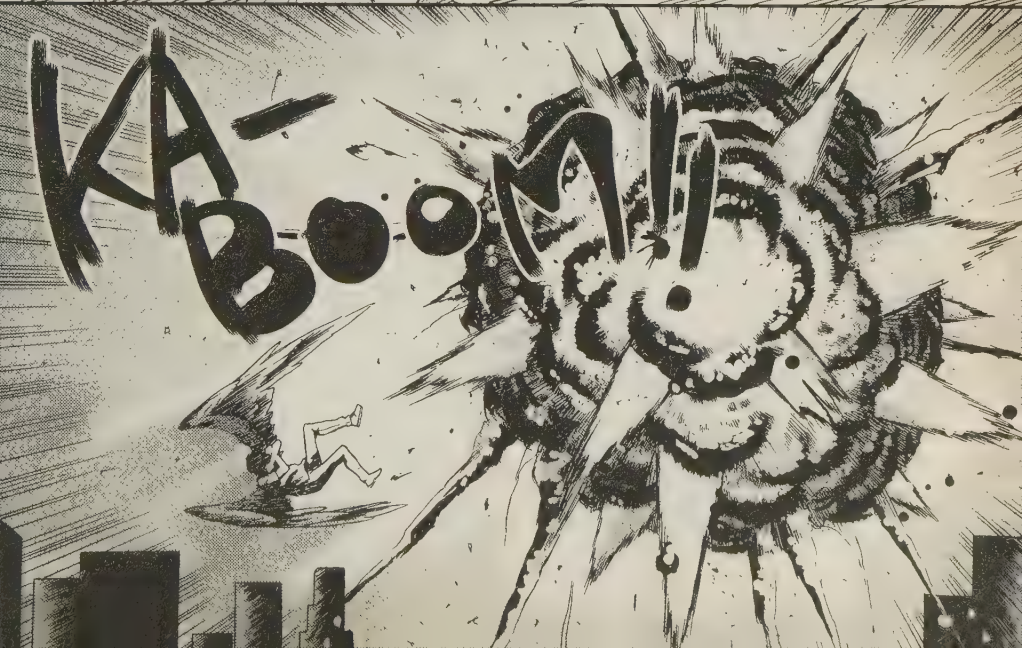
ARGH!



FANG,
OUT OF THE
WAY!



BLAM!!!



KA-BOOM!!!

WHEW!

THAT
WAS SOME
ACTION!

LAND...

THANKS.

THANKS
FOR
EVERY-
THING.

FWISF

DIE!
DIE!

FWISF

IG,
WATCH
OUT!

IG,
GAZZY!
S'OVER!
LET'S
GO!

WHEE-OOO
WHEE-OOO

POLICE
COMING.

WE
GOTTA
GO.

THANKS
AGAIN.

WHEE-OOO

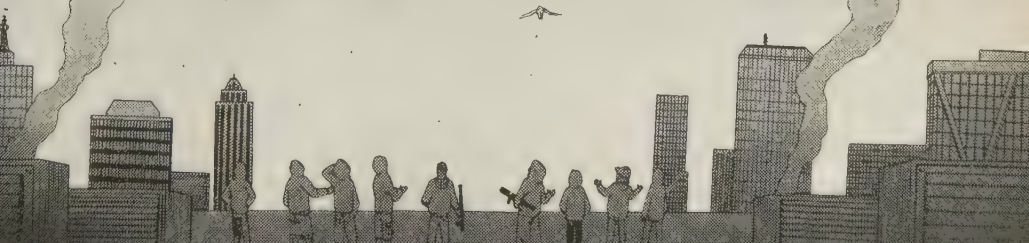
BUMP

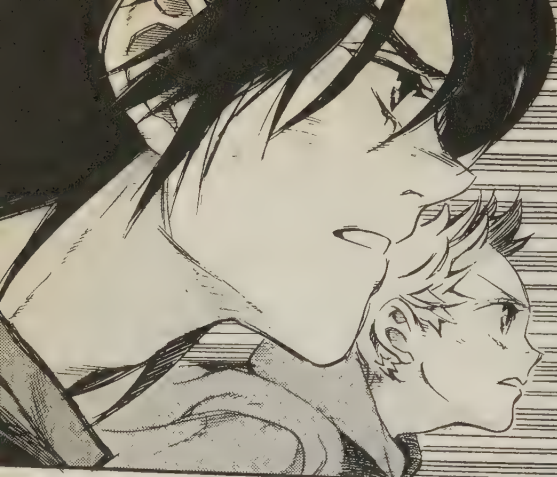
BEST OF
LUCK.

YOU KNOW
WHERE TO
FIND US IF
YOU NEED
HELP, BRO.

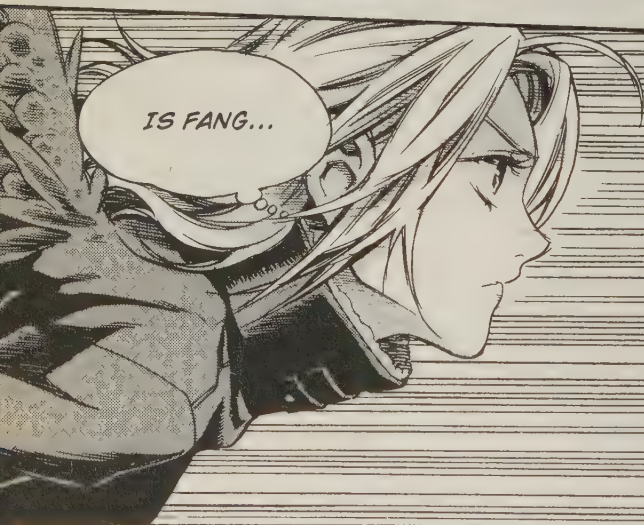
YEAH.

FWOOOOOSH





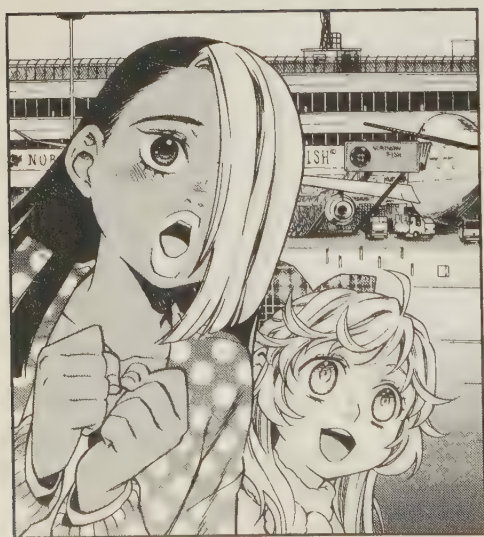
IS MAX...



IS FANG...

*...DOING
OKAY?*

MAXIMUM
RIDE



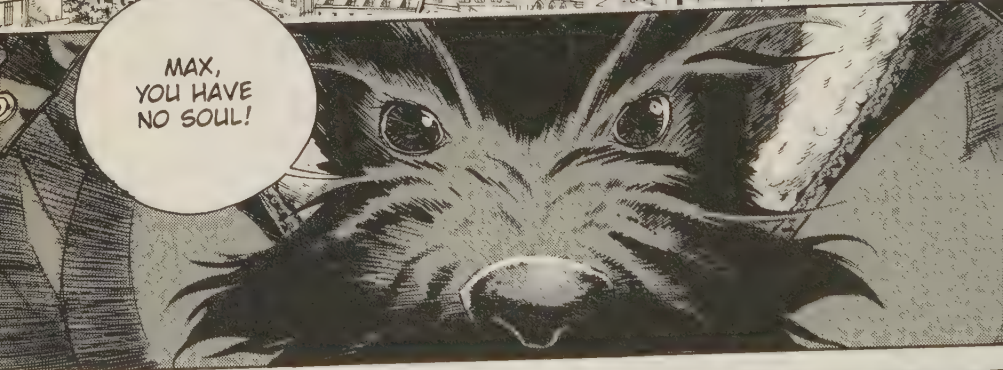


MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 37

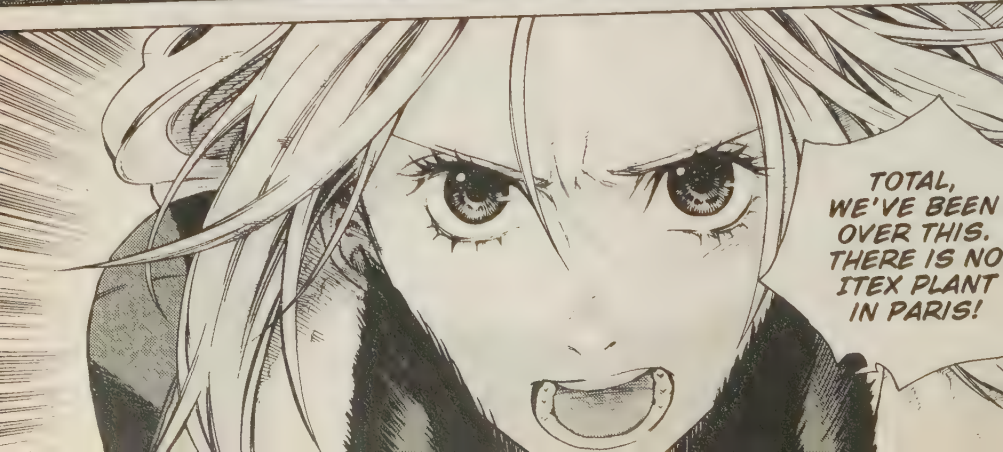


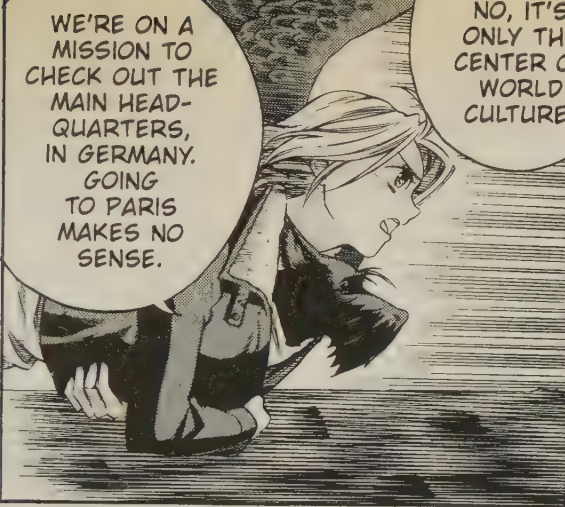


MAX,
YOU HAVE
NO SOUL!



TOTAL,
WE'VE BEEN
OVER THIS.
THERE IS NO
ITEX PLANT
IN PARIS!

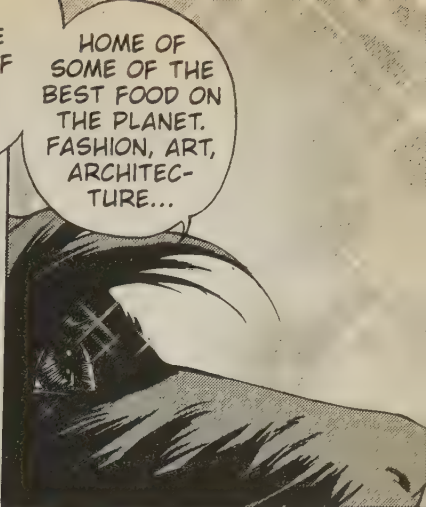




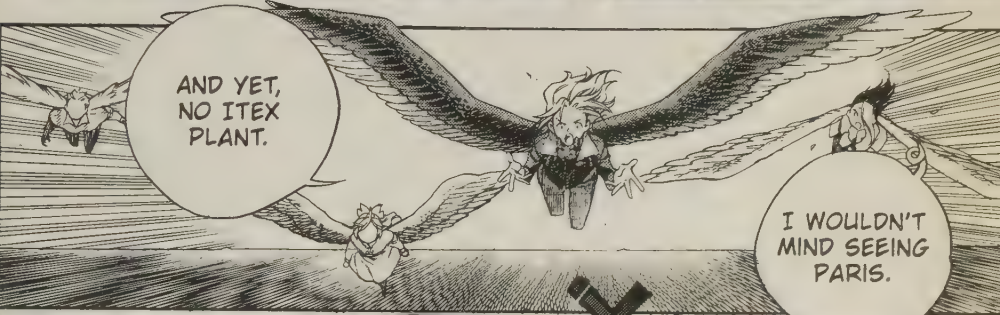
WE'RE ON A MISSION TO CHECK OUT THE MAIN HEAD-QUARTERS, IN GERMANY.

GOING TO PARIS MAKES NO SENSE.

NO, IT'S ONLY THE CENTER OF WORLD CULTURE.



HOME OF SOME OF THE BEST FOOD ON THE PLANET. FASHION, ART, ARCHITECTURE...



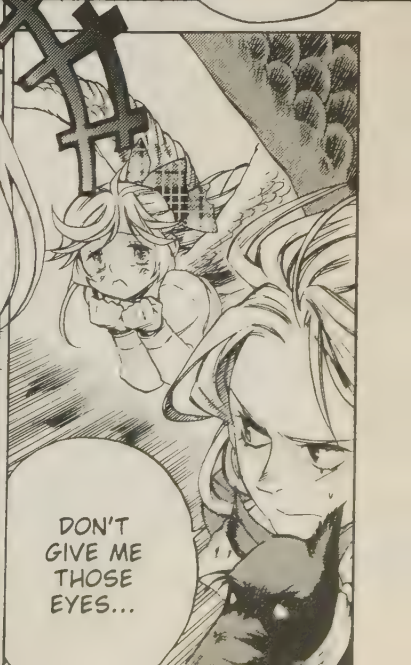
AND YET, NO ITEX PLANT.

I WOULDN'T MIND SEEING PARIS.



I SAW THIS GUIDEBOOK BACK AT THE LIBRARY. THEY HAVE LITTLE CANAL BOATS YOU CAN TAKE TOURS ON...

...AND FANCY GARDENS, AND THAT LOOVRA MUSEUM, AND PALACES, AND ALL KINDS OF STUFF.



DON'T GIVE ME THOSE EYES...



LIFE
IS SO
SHORT...

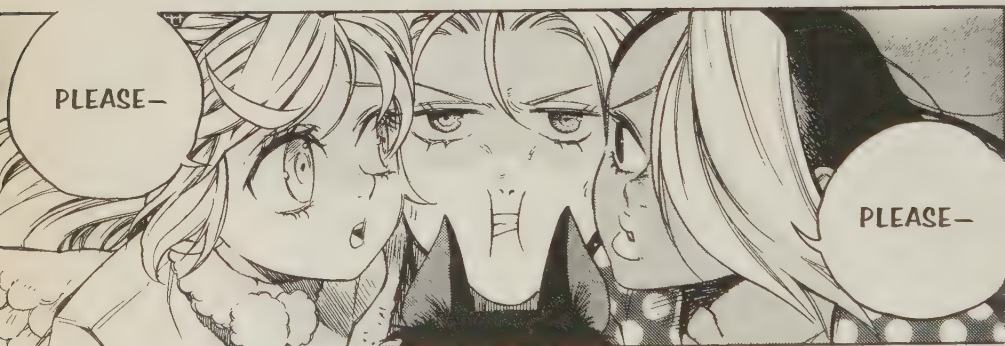
THAT'S NOT
SOMETHING
A SIX-
YEAR-OLD
SHOULD
SAY!



SO
SHORT AND
SO HARD.
THE IDEA OF
SEEING THE
CITY OF
LIGHT, JUST
ONCE...

IT
WOULD
ALMOST
MAKE EVERY-
THING SEEM
WORTHWHILE.

OH, FOR
GOD'S
SAKE.



PLEASE—

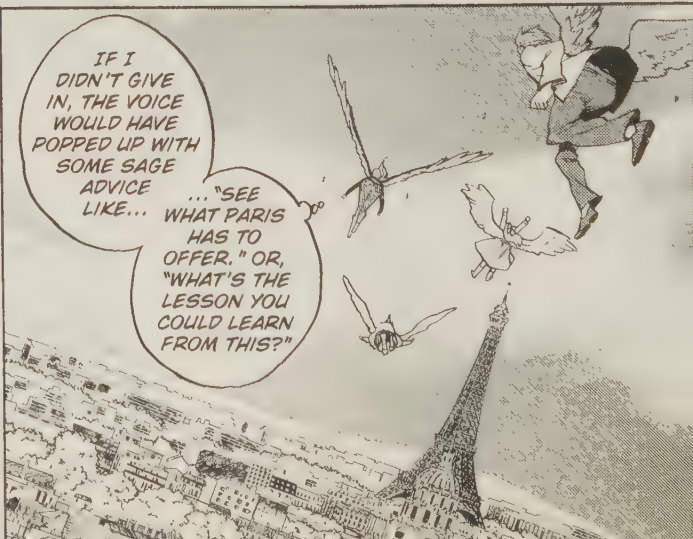
PLEASE—



OH, FINE!
NOW GET
OFF OF
ME!

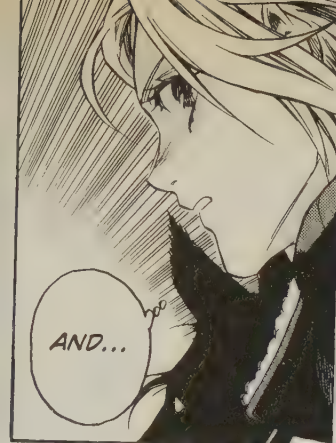
I can't fly!

YAAAY!!



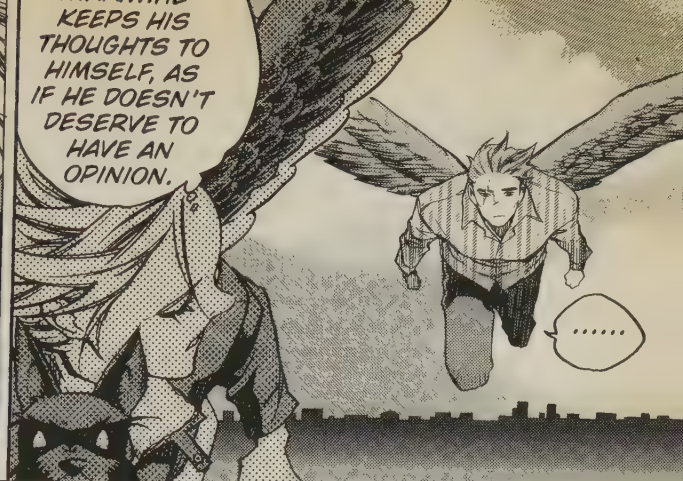
IF I
DIDN'T GIVE
IN, THE VOICE
WOULD HAVE
POPPED UP WITH
SOME SAGE
ADVICE
LIKE...

... "SEE
WHAT PARIS
HAS TO
OFFER," OR,
"WHAT'S THE
LESSON YOU
COULD LEARN
FROM THIS?"



AND...

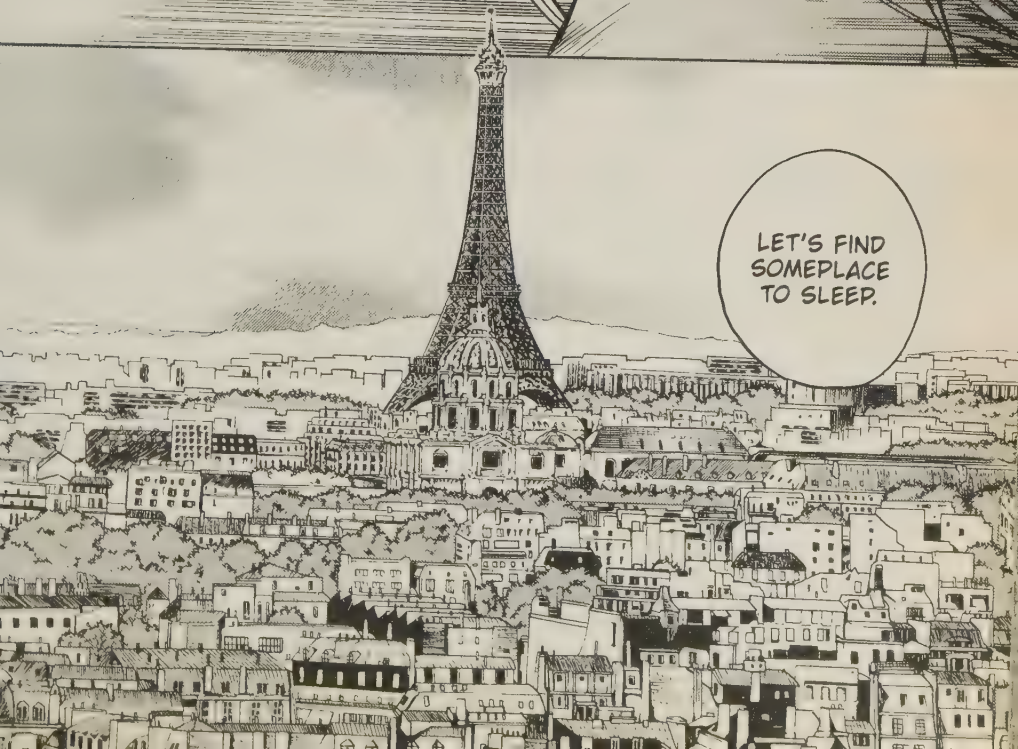
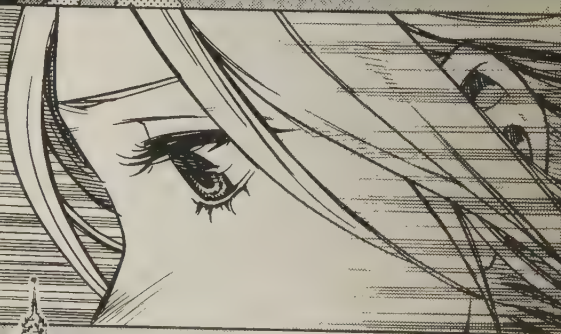
KEEPS HIS
THOUGHTS TO
HIMSELF, AS
IF HE DOESN'T
DESERVE TO
HAVE AN
OPINION.



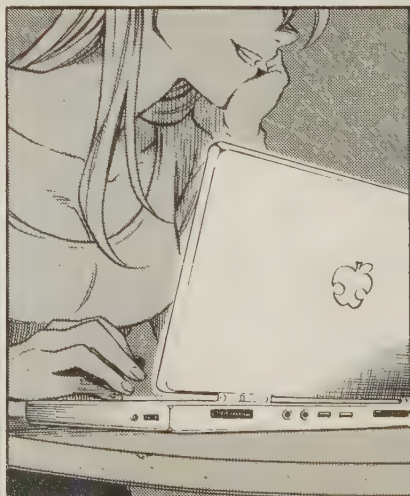
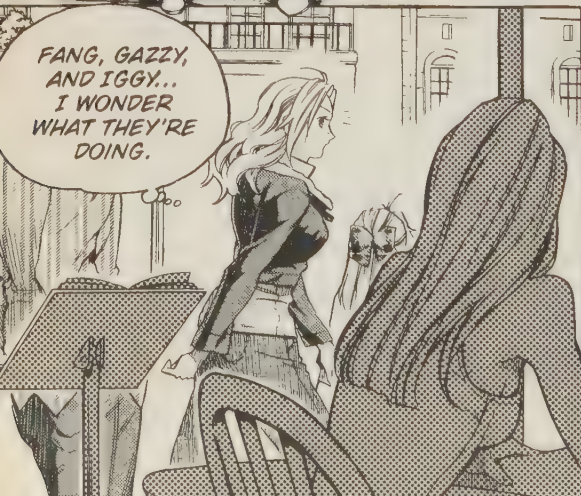
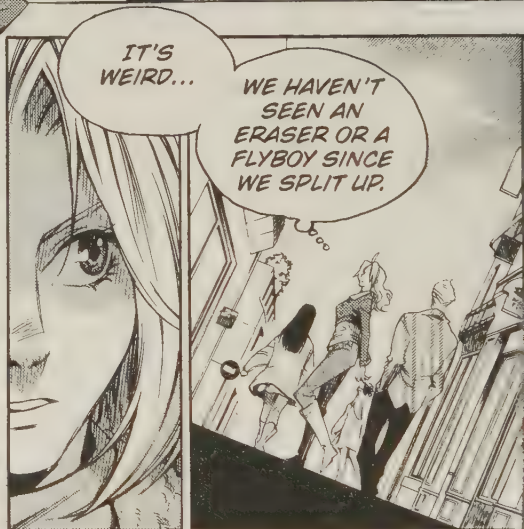
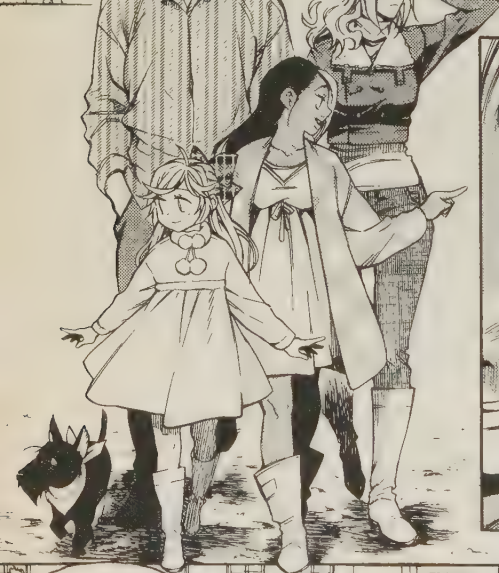
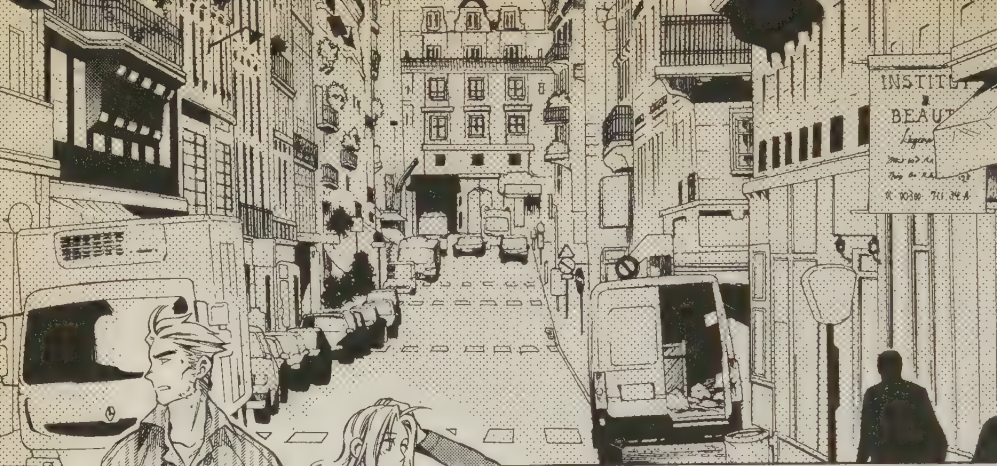
.....

PARIS MIGHT
BE ONE OF
THE LAST FUN
THINGS HE
DOES IN THIS
LIFE.

DOE



LET'S FIND
SOMEPLACE
TO SLEEP.



I'M
DYING TO FIND
AN INTERNET
CAFÉ AND READ
FANG'S BLOG!

ARGH~!

OMG! MAX,
LOOK AT THIS
SCARF!

IT'S
FABULOUS!

MAX, CAN I
HAVE THIS?
PLEASE?
PLEASE?

ARGH,
OKAY.

RAGGED

RAGGED?

ARI,
COME!

?

?

IT'S
YOU.

NOTHING'S
COMFORTABLE
WHEN YOU'RE
BUILT LIKE
THIS.

IT'S NOT LIKE
MY WINGS FOLD
PERFECTLY LIKE
YOURS.

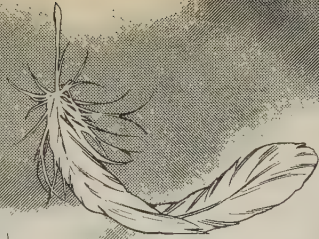
IS IT
COMFORT-
ABLE?

THE EXPIRATION
DATE... HIS TIME
IS COMING. VERY,
VERY SOON.

I'M GLAD
I'VE SHOWN
HIM PARIS.

LAST
STOP,
EIFFEL
TOWER!

YAAAY!

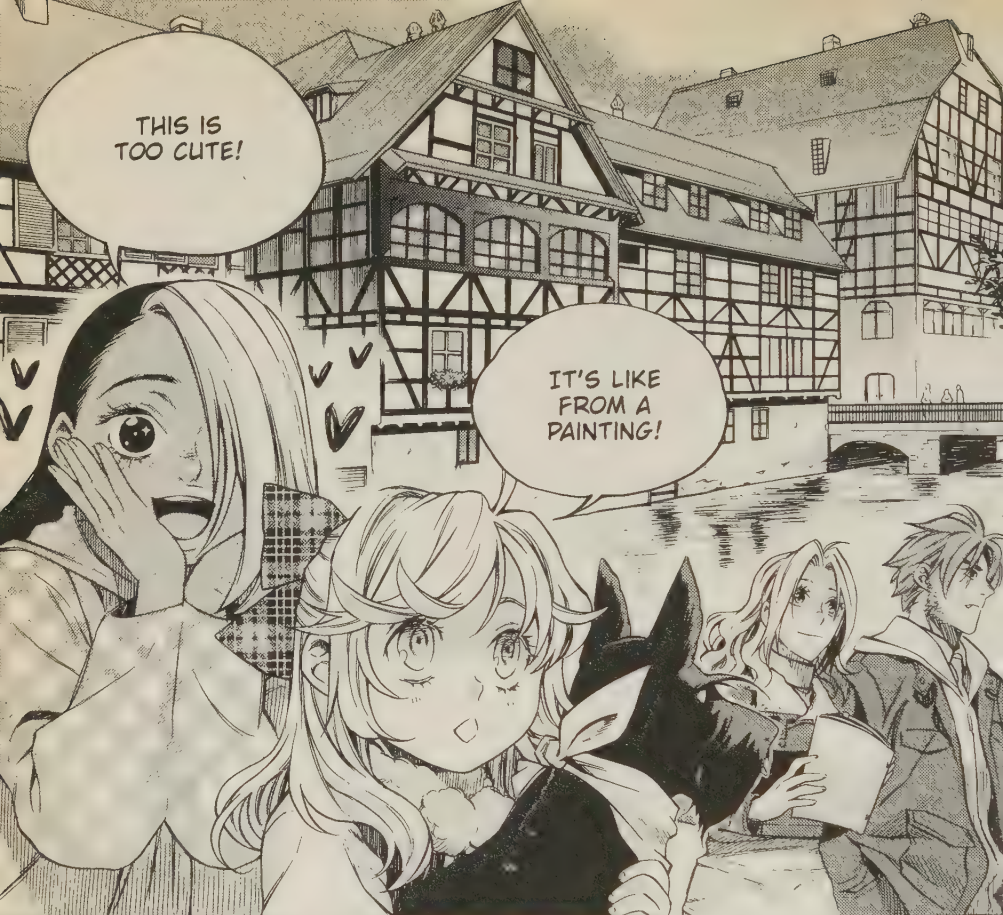


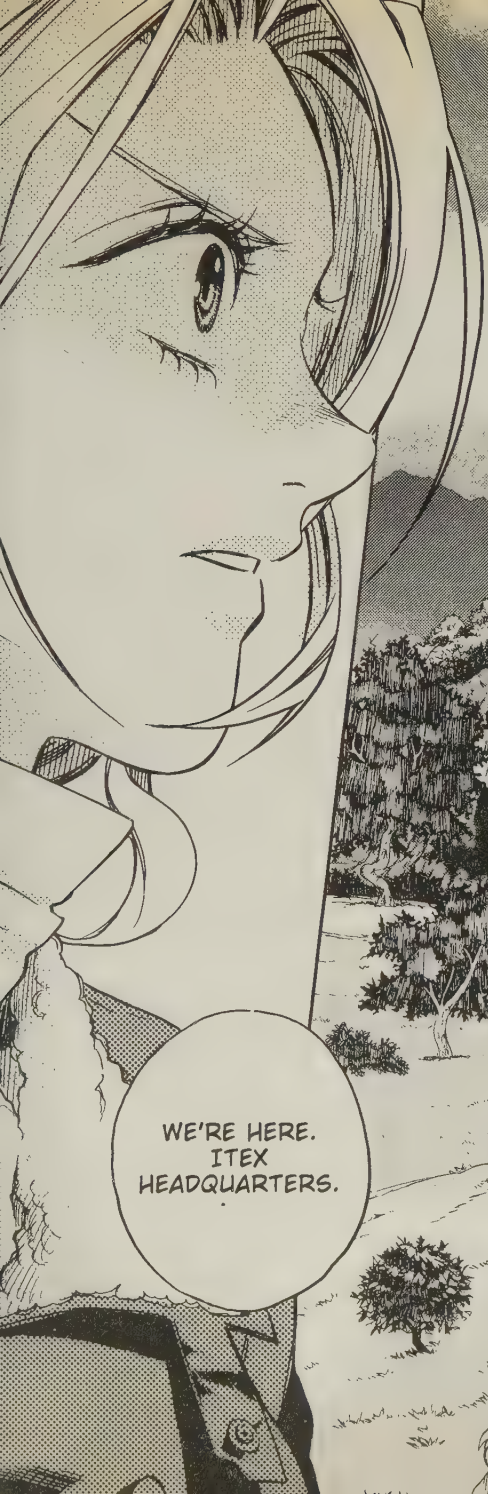
EUROPE WAS
WEENSY. IT WAS
LIKE, "OOPS, I
BLINKED! THERE
GOES BELGIUM!"

FLYING FROM ENGLAND
TO FRANCE TOOK ABOUT
THIRTY MINUTES.
CROSSING OVER FRANCE
TOOK ABOUT SIX HOURS.
IT HAD TAKEN US
ALMOST EIGHT HOURS
TO CROSS TEXAS.

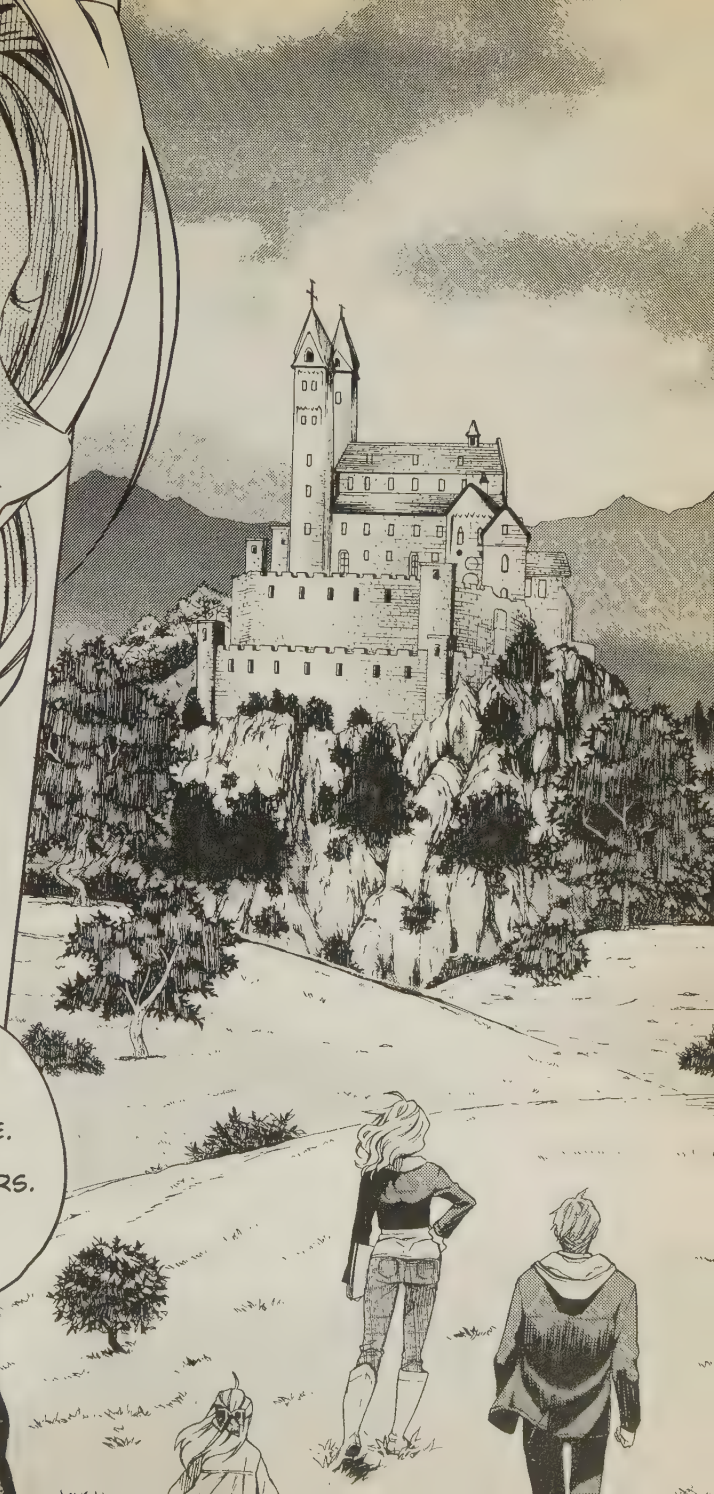


AND NOW
WE WERE IN
GERMANY.



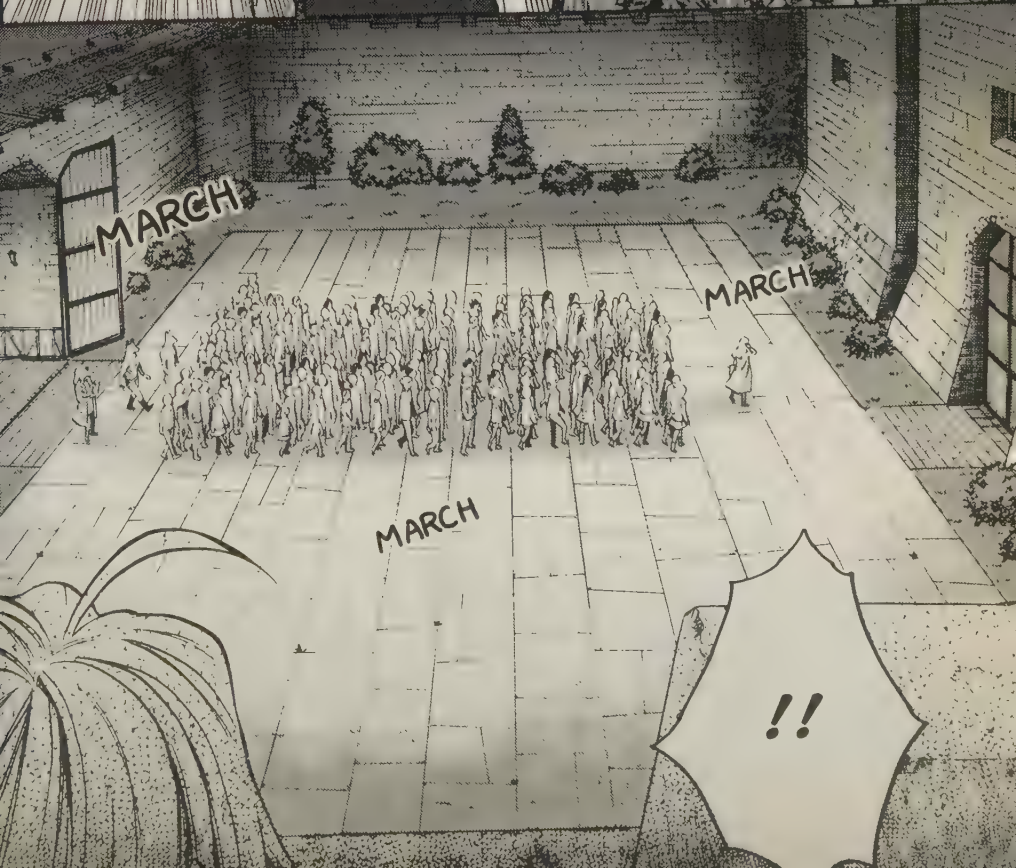
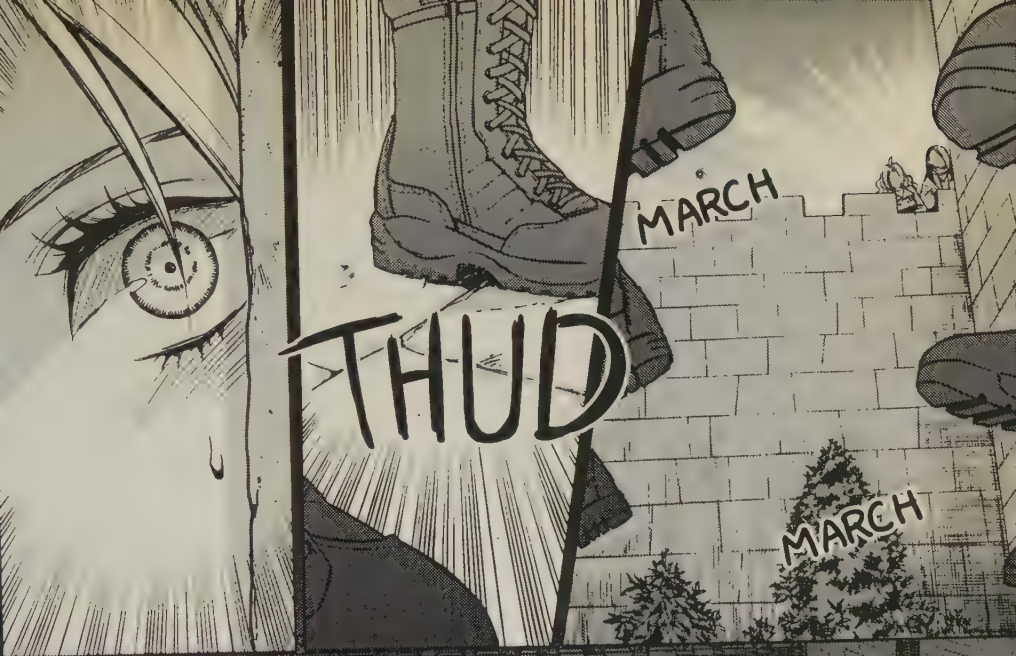


WE'RE HERE.
ITEX
HEADQUARTERS.



THAT NIGHT.





OMG!

DO YOU
SEE
THAT?

MAX II!!

?

YEP.
WE MEET
AGAIN.

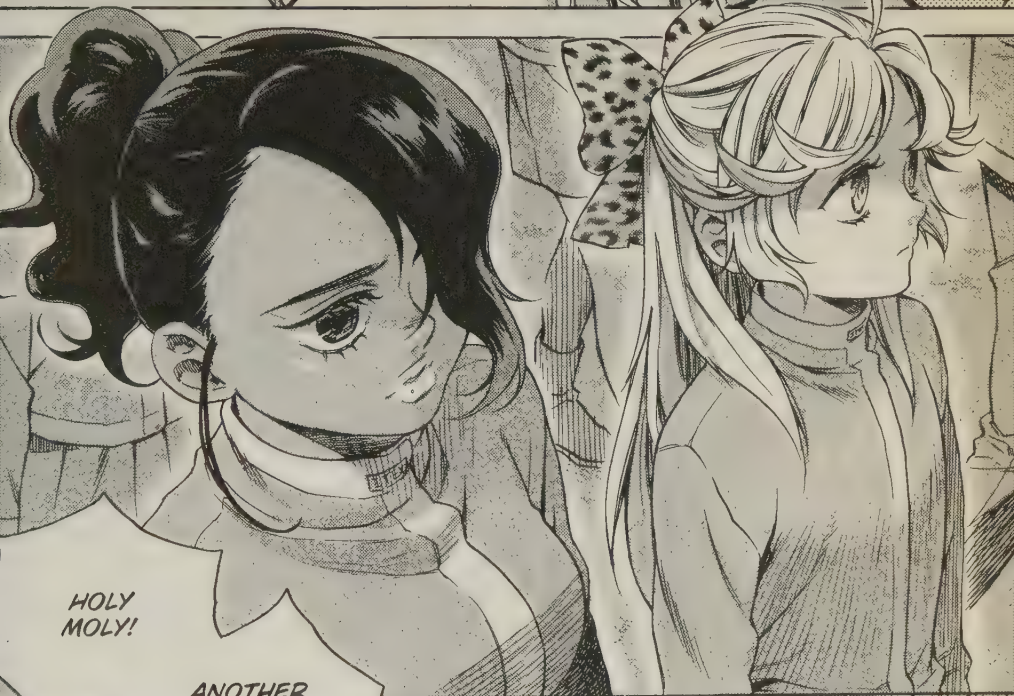
WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

WE'VE
NEVER
SEEN HER
BEFORE.

HELLO? YOU
DON'T REMEMBER
THAT TOPSY-TURVY
DAY WHEN "I" TRIED
TO COOK AND
OFFERED TO FIX
YOUR HAIR?

YEAH.
THAT WAS
MAX TWO.

THAT'S NOT
WHAT I'M
TALKING ABOUT!
LOOK, FOUR
ROWS BEHIND
HER!



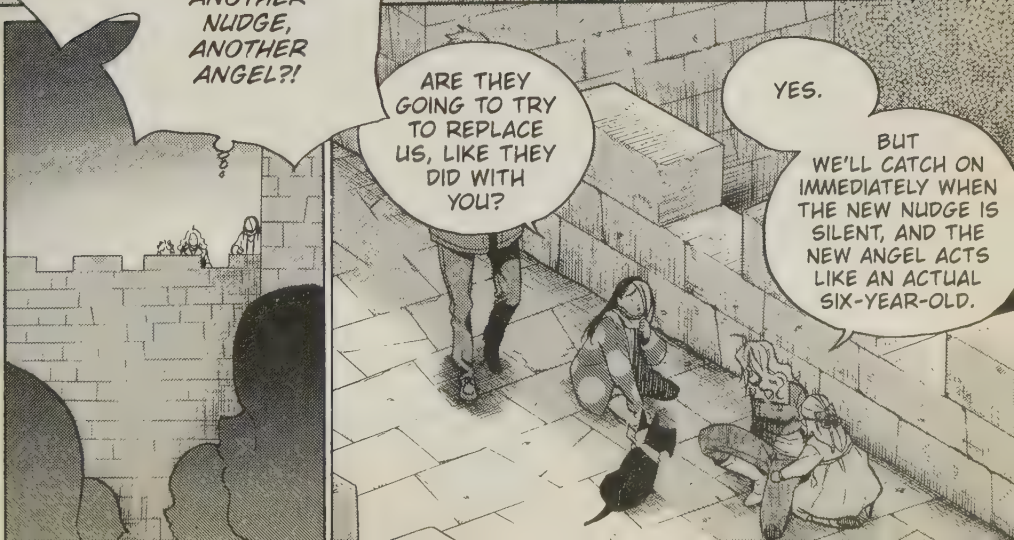
HOLY
MOLY!

ANOTHER
NUDGE,
ANOTHER
ANGEL?!

ARE THEY
GOING TO TRY
TO REPLACE
US, LIKE THEY
DID WITH
YOU?

YES.

BUT
WE'LL CATCH ON
IMMEDIATELY WHEN
THE NEW NUDGE IS
SILENT, AND THE
NEW ANGEL ACTS
LIKE AN ACTUAL
SIX-YEAR-OLD.



ACTUALLY...

LET'S COME
UP WITH A
CODE WORD
TO USE...

OKAY.

...WHEN WE
NEED TO
MAKE SURE
WE'RE THE
RIGHT ONES.
OKAY?

OOH,
I'VE GOT
ONE.

WHISPER

NOD

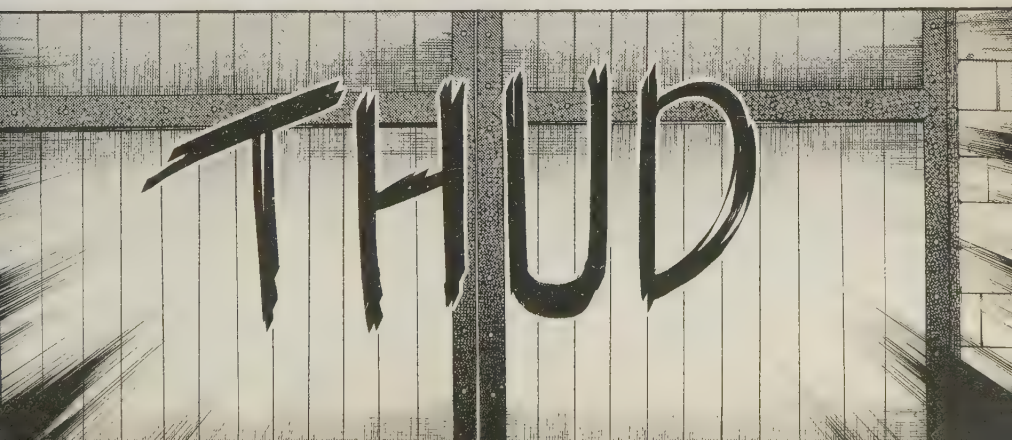
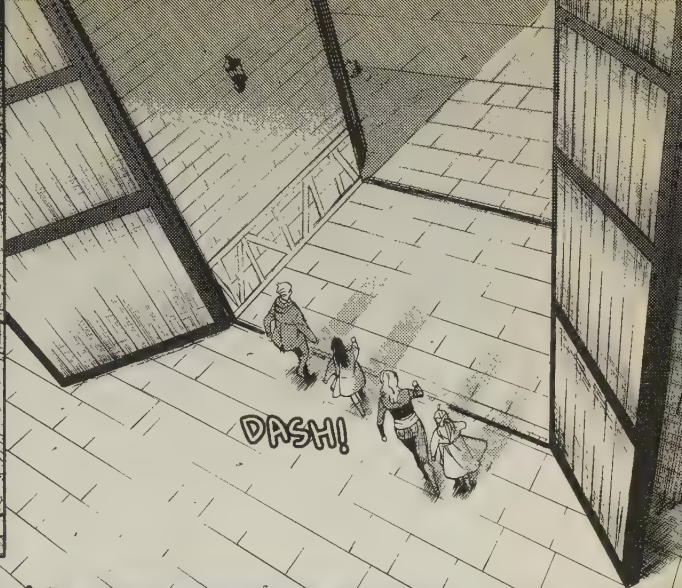
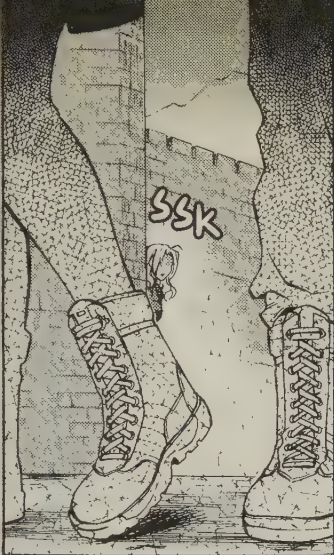
BUMP

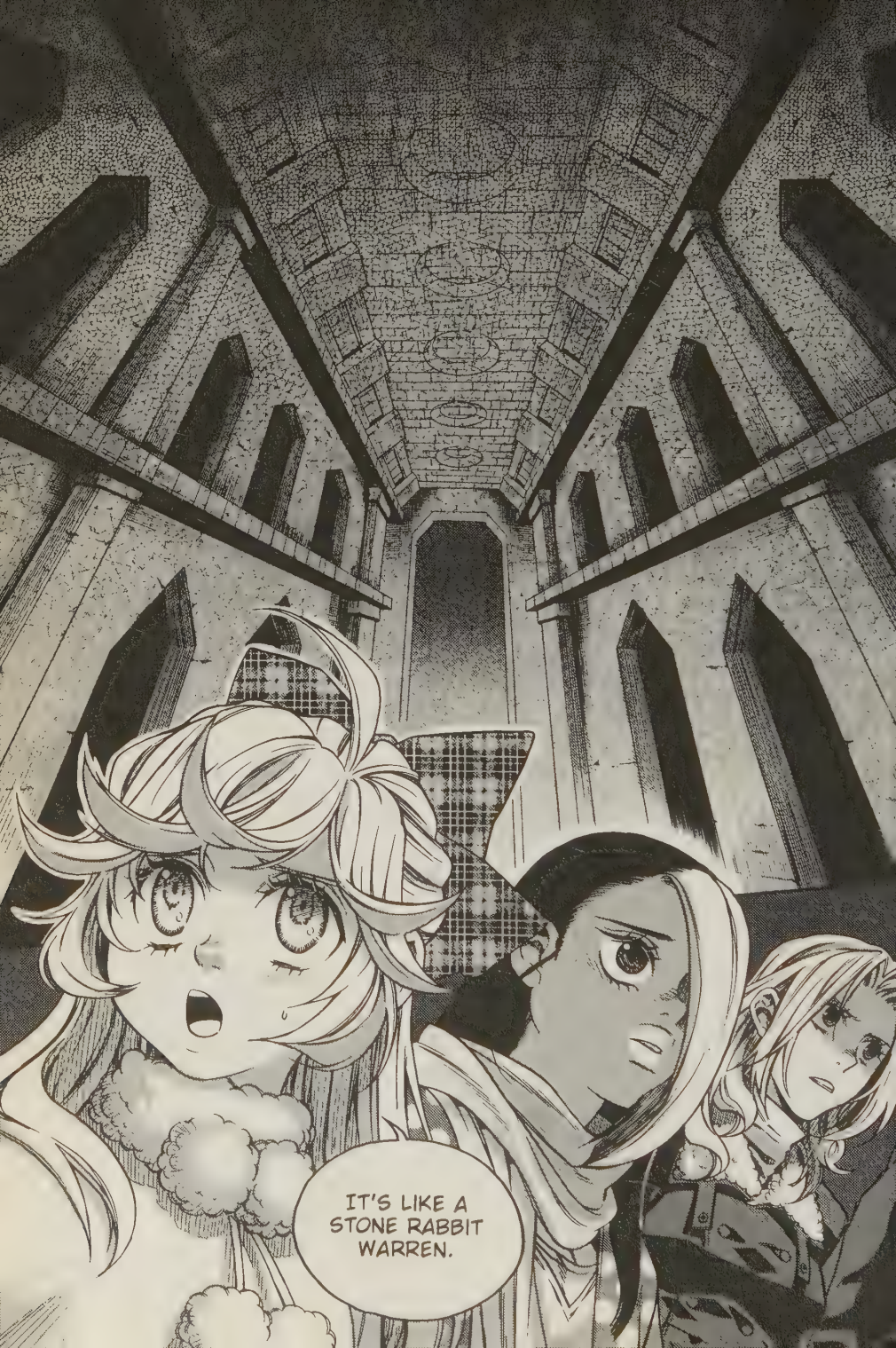
HEE-
HEE.

PERFECT!

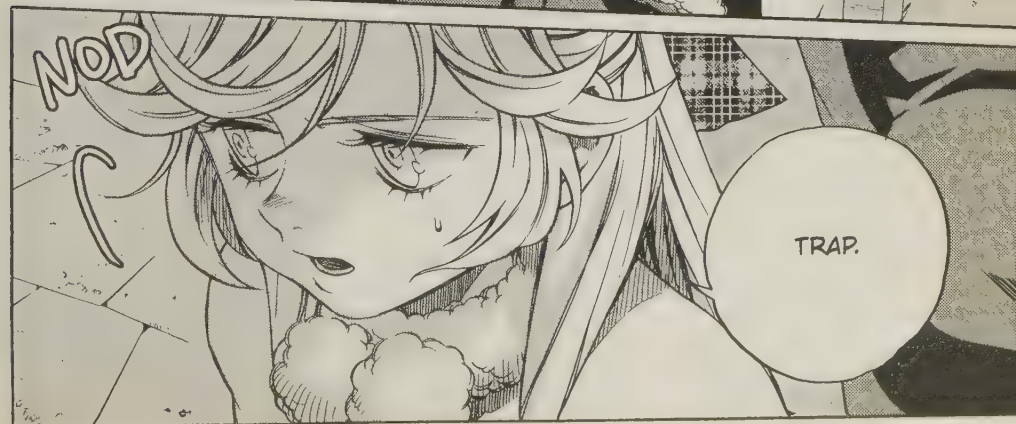
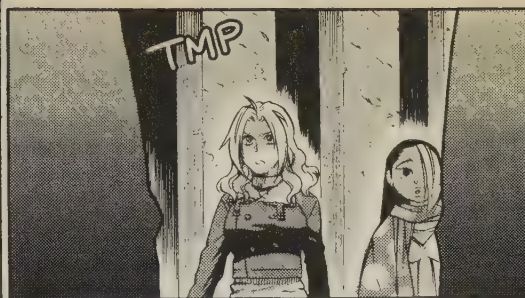
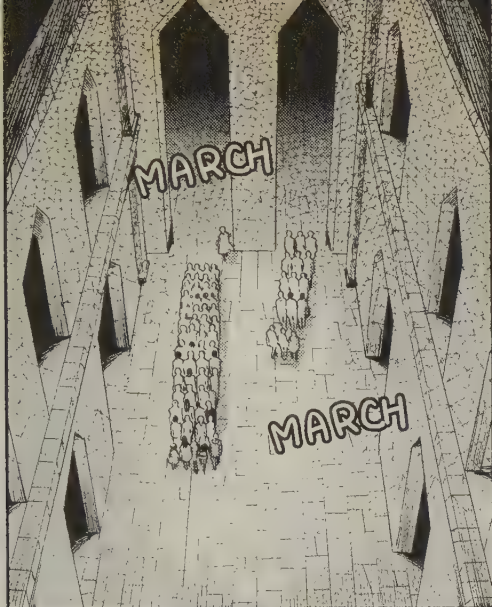
LET'S
CATCH
UP WITH
THEM AND
SNEAK IN.

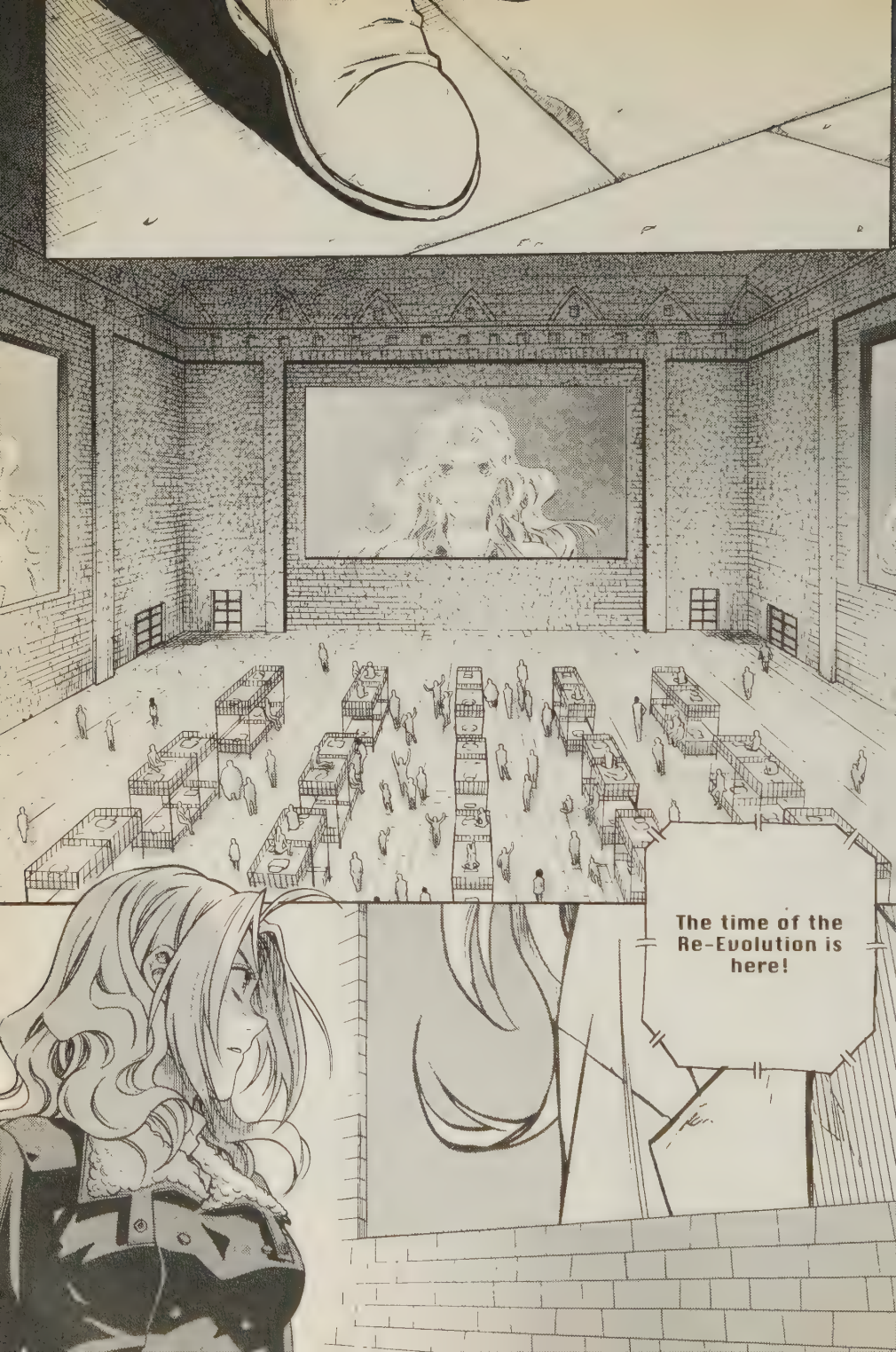
THIS
WAY.



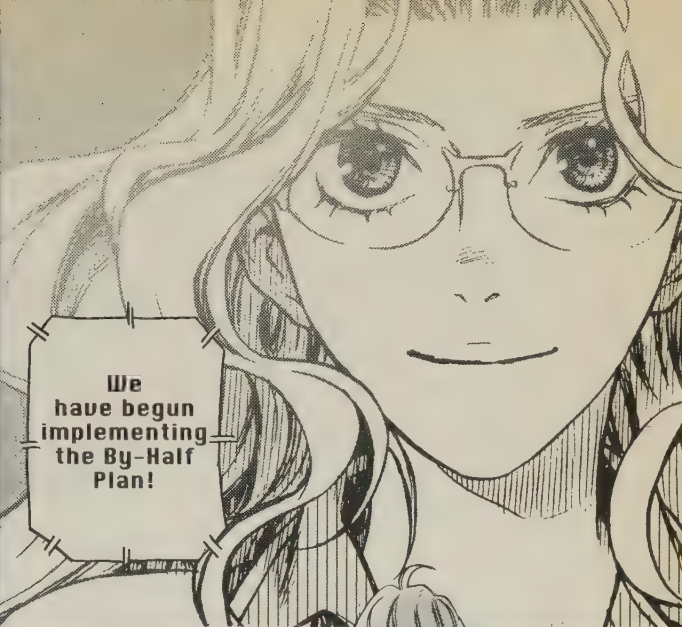


IT'S LIKE A
STONE RABBIT
WARREN.





The time of the
Re-Evolution is
here!



WHO DOES SHE REMIND ME OF?

NO IDEA.

We have begun implementing the By-Half Plan!

Even as you watch this, the weak, the unnecessary...

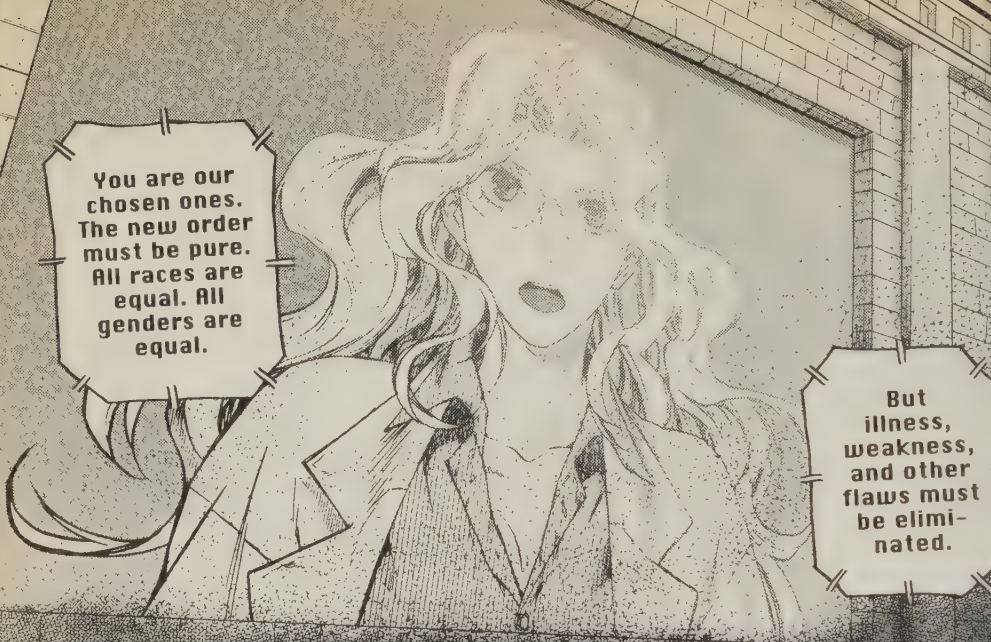
...the ones who drain our resources are being eliminated!

The causes of war will be eliminated.

We are creating a new world.

A world where there will be no hunger, no sickness, no weakness.

There will be plenty of food and room for everyone. People will cease to fight over property, food, wealth, energy resources.



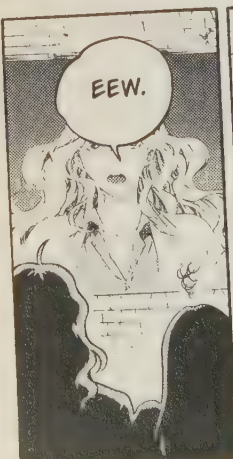
You are our
chosen ones.
The new order
must be pure.
All races are
equal. All
genders are
equal.

But
illness,
weakness,
and other
flaws must
be elimi-
nated.

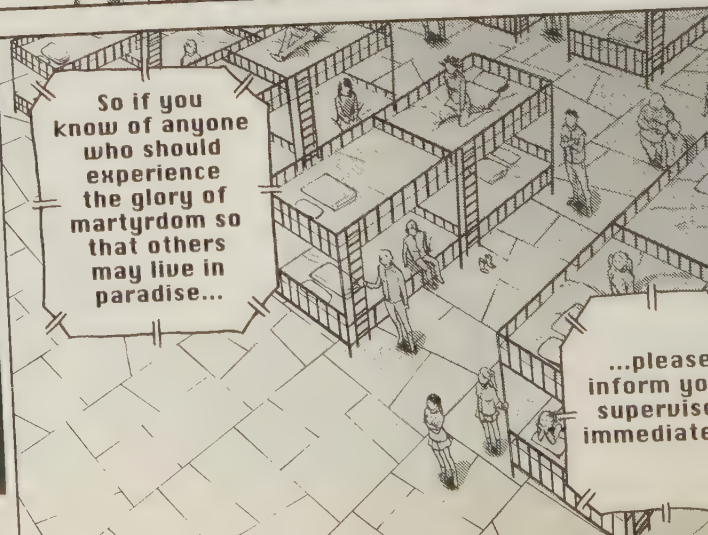
ALL
GENDERS
?

AREN'T
THERE
JUST THE
TWO?

NO IDEA.
MAYBE
THEY'VE
CREATED
OTHERS.



EEW.



So if you
know of anyone
who should
experience
the glory of
martyrdom so
that others
may live in
paradise...

...please
inform you
superviso
immediate

OH MY GOD.
THEY WANT
PEOPLE TO
TURN IN ANY-
ONE WHO ISN'T
PERFECT.

CLENGH...

I COULDN'T
HAVE SAID IT
BETTER MYSELF,
MAX.

THROB...

WHICH
IS, LIKE,
EVERYONE!
NO ONE IS
PERFECT!

SO WHAT
NOW?

YOU'RE
WHERE
YOU NEED
TO BE...

...DOING
WHAT YOU
NEED TO
DO.

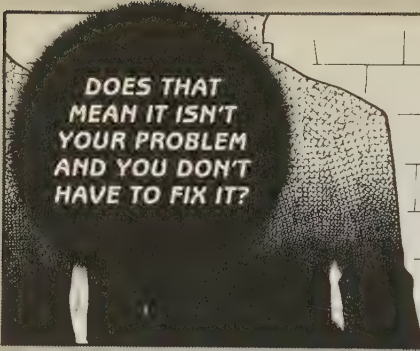
BUT ARE
YOU SURE
YOU CAN DO
THIS ALONE?

YOU'RE
MISSING HALF
YOUR FAMILY,
WHO ARE ALSO
HALF YOUR
ARMY.

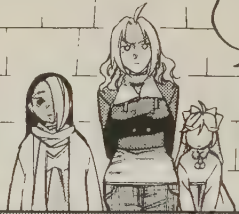
NOT MY
FAULT.

NOT MY
DECISION.

I'VE GOT
NUDGE AND
ANGEL AND
TOTAL AND
ARI.



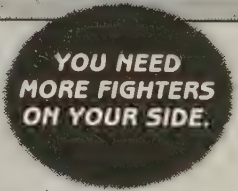
**DOES THAT
MEAN IT ISN'T
YOUR PROBLEM
AND YOU DON'T
HAVE TO FIX IT?**



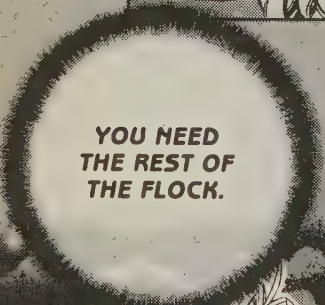
.....



**AND
YOUR POINT
IS...?**



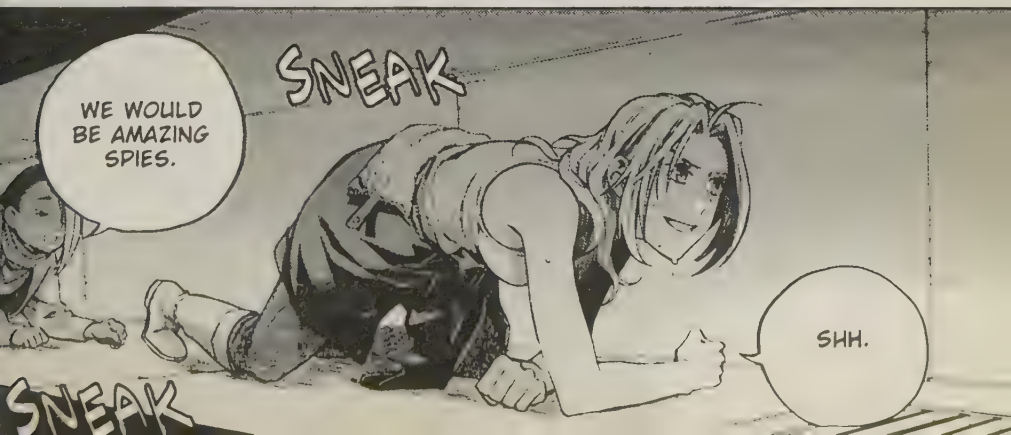
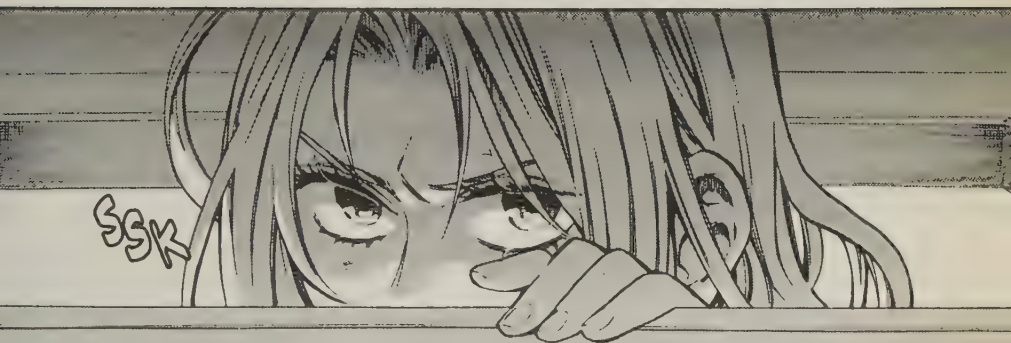
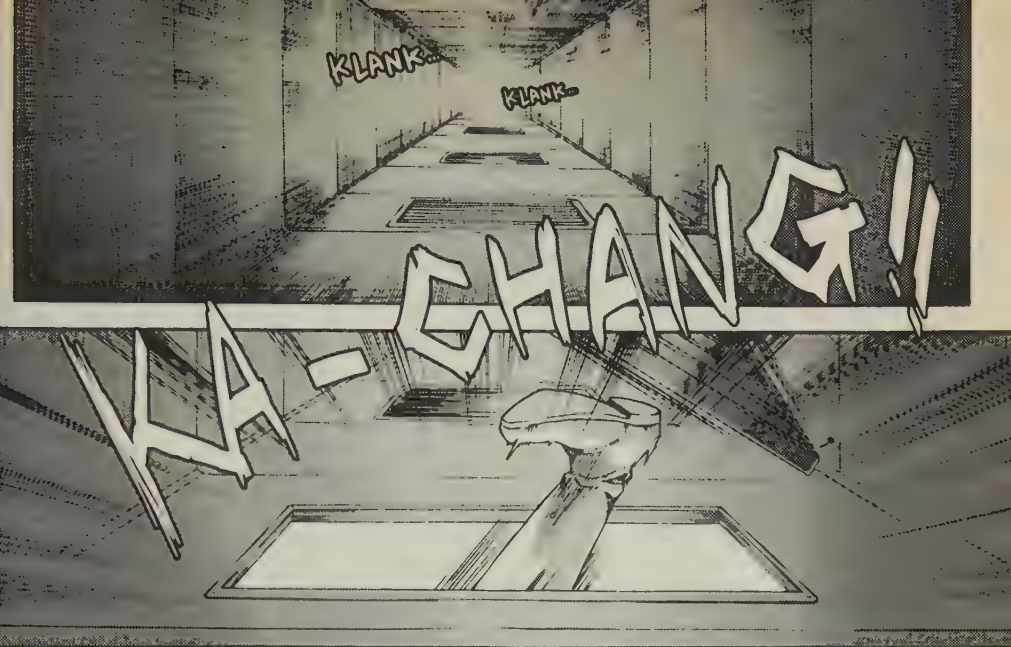
**YOU NEED
MORE FIGHTERS
ON YOUR SIDE.**

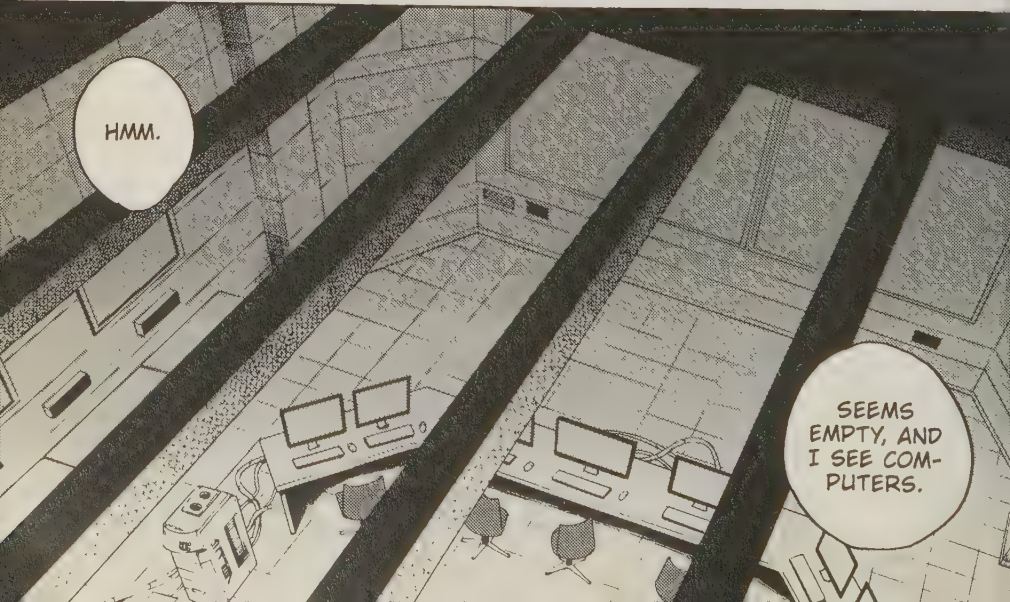
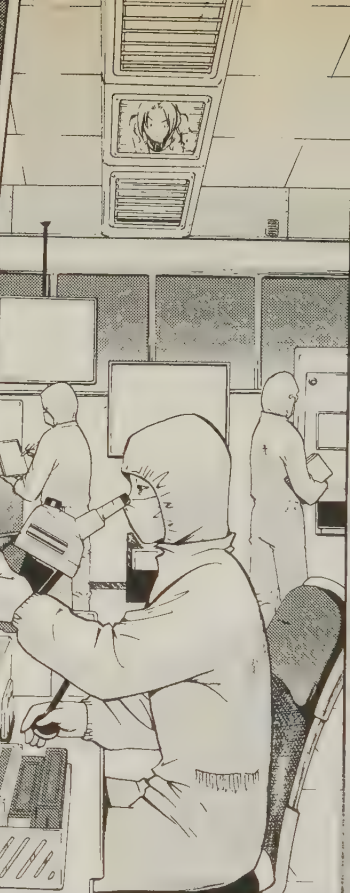


**YOU NEED
THE REST OF
THE FLOCK.**



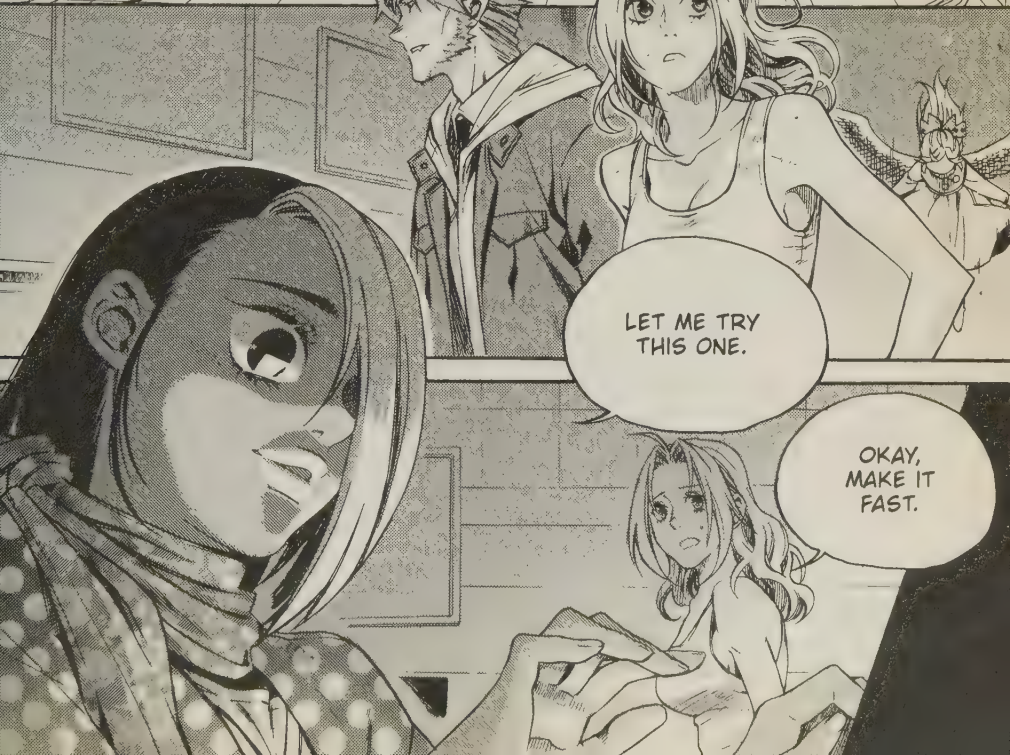
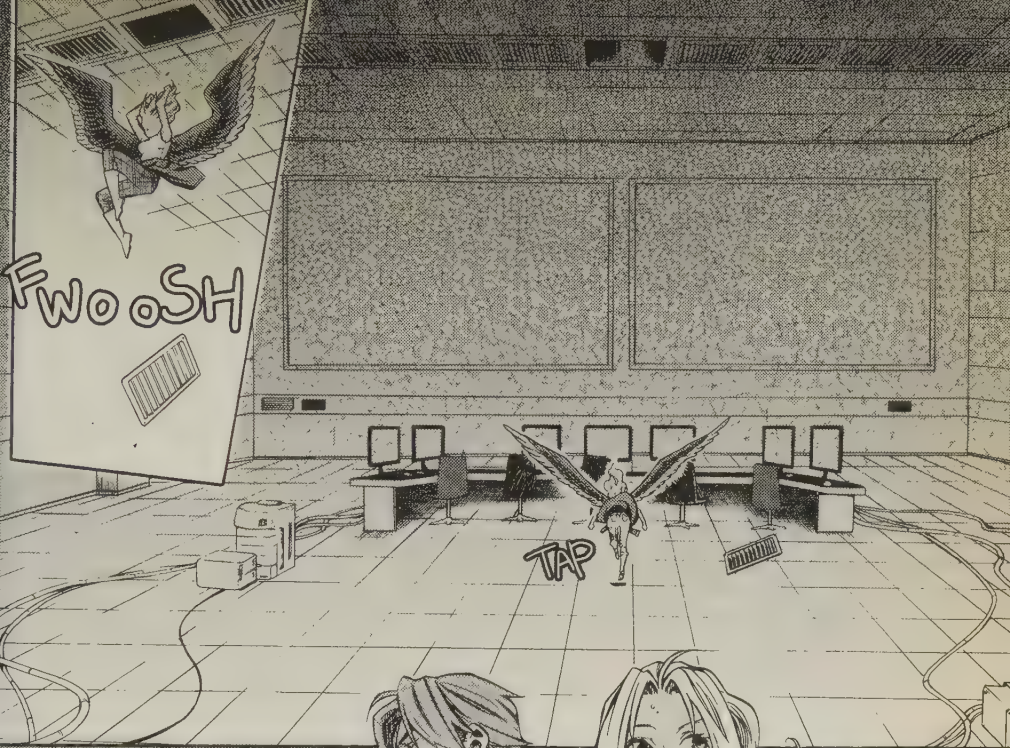
**GET THEM
BACK.**

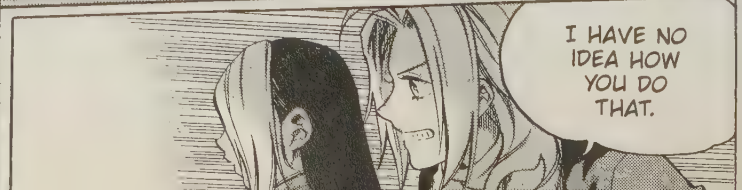
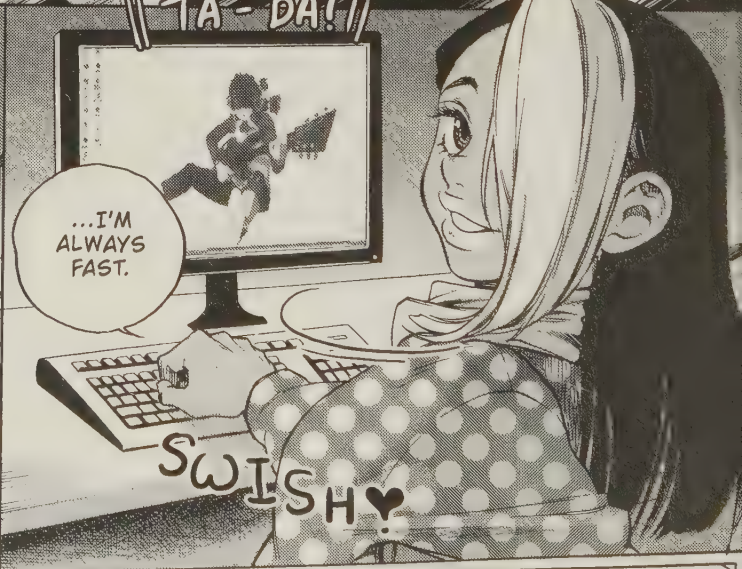
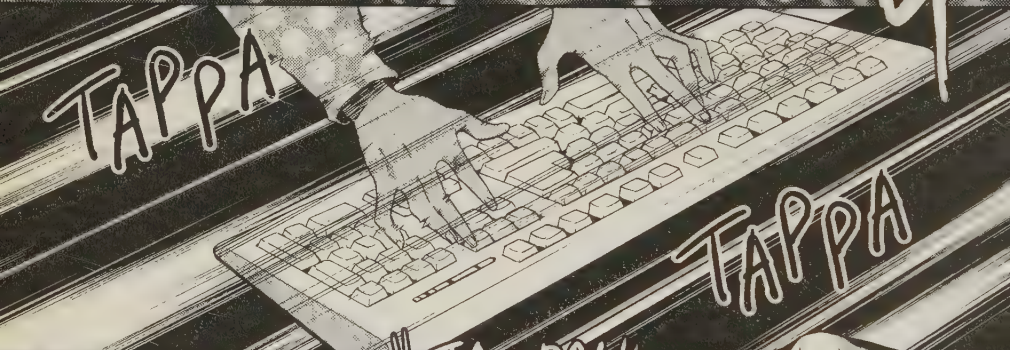
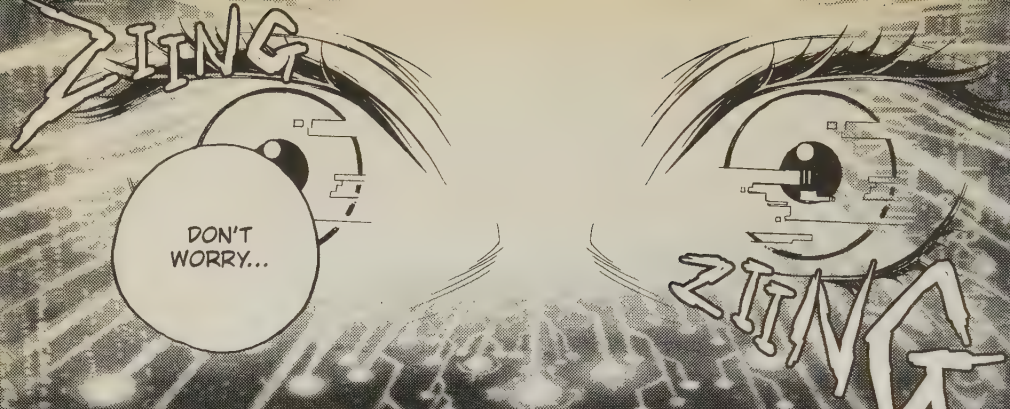




HMM.

SEEMS
EMPTY, AND
I SEE COM-
PUTERS.





WHAT
NEXT?

TELL FANG
TO COME TO
LENDEHEIM
RIGHT AWAY,
WITH EVERYBODY.
TELL HIM THINGS
ARE REALLY,
REALLY BAD.

I KNOW
HE GETS A
KATRILLION
MESSAGES
A DAY...

...BUT I
HOPE THIS
SUBJECT,
ALL IN CAPS,
CATCHES
HIS EYE.

TAPPA

SUBJECT: THIS IS FROM MAX. READ IT NOW!!!!

SENDING
IT NOW!

Attachments

Emoticons

12

TAPPA

CONTACTS

THIS IS FROM MAX. R...

Compose Message

Send

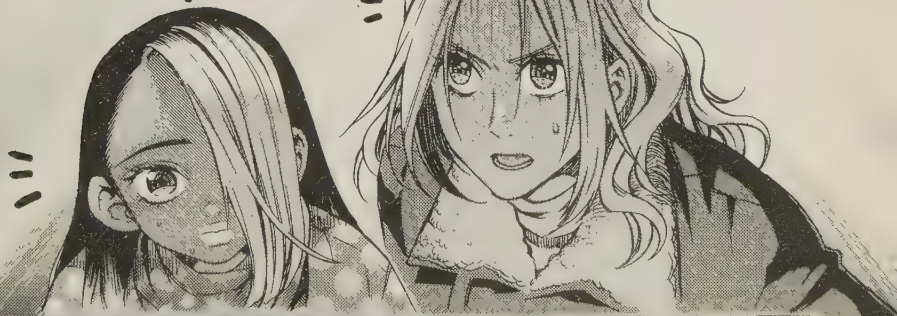
Cancel

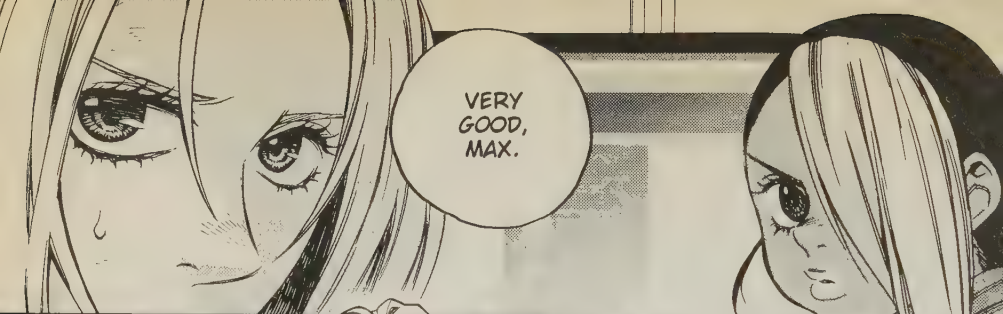
Save as Draft

CLICK

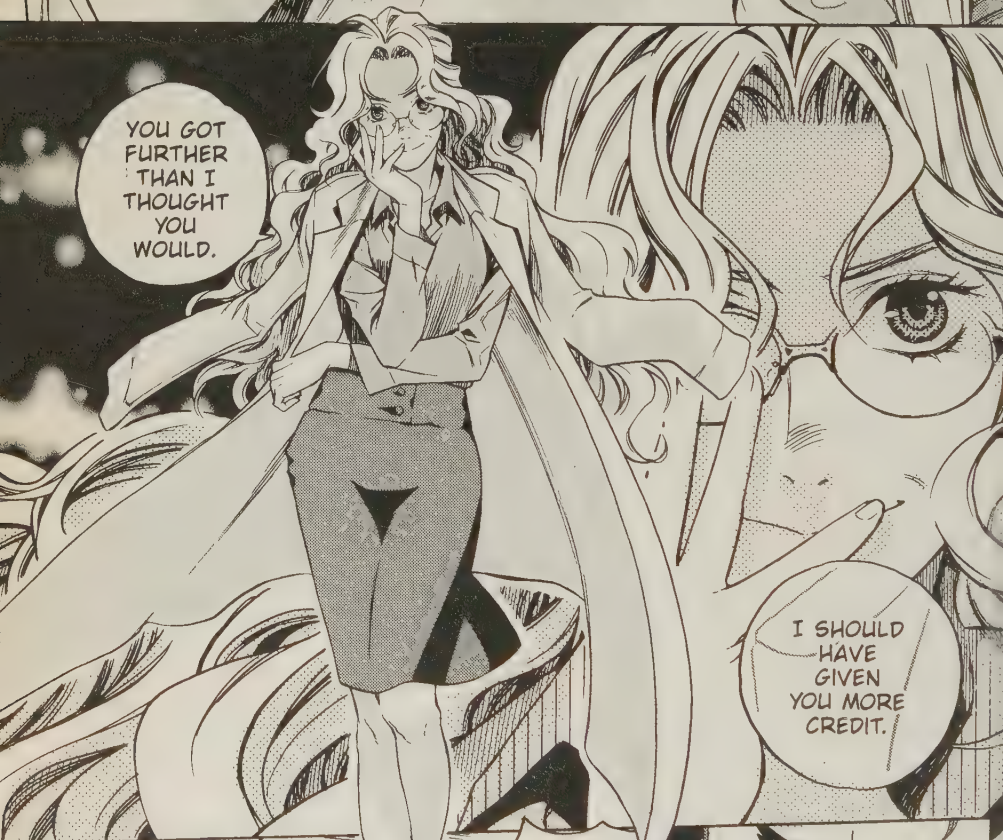
TO: fang01@heaven.com

FLASH!





VERY
GOOD,
MAX.



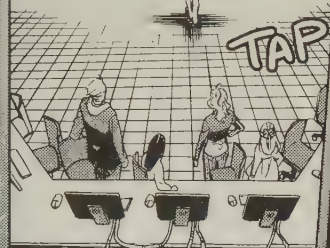
YOU GOT
FURTHER
THAN I
THOUGHT
YOU
WOULD.

I SHOULD
HAVE
GIVEN
YOU MORE
CREDIT.



OH
CRAP!

TAP

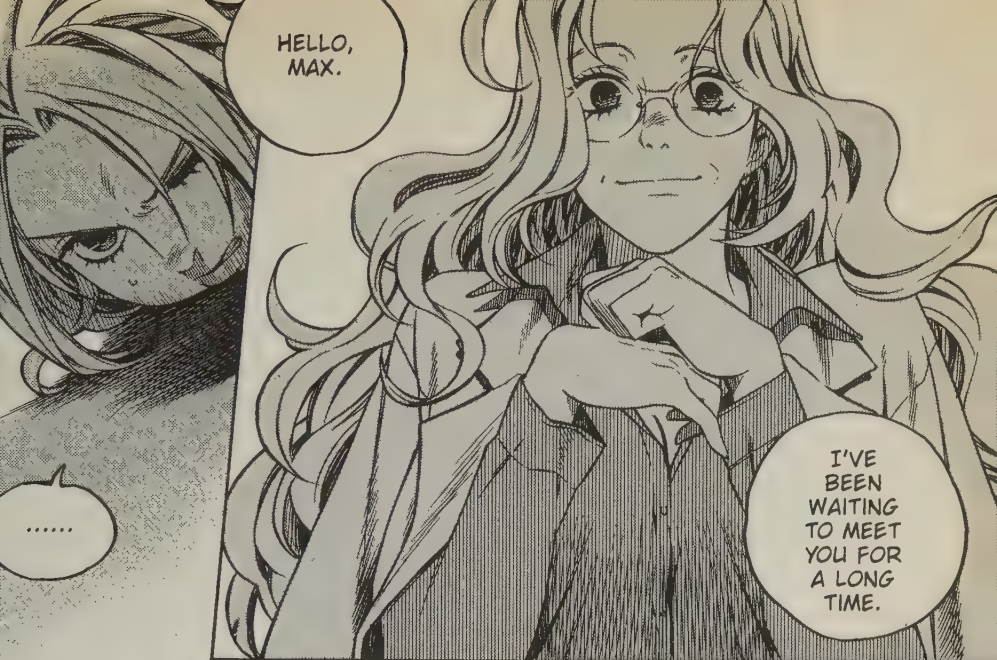


HOW
ELOQUENT.



ATTACK
THEM!!





HELLO,
MAX.

I'VE
BEEN
WAITING
TO MEET
YOU FOR
A LONG
TIME.

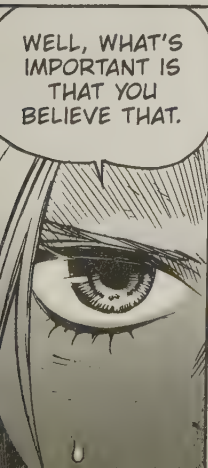
DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR

Marian Janssen

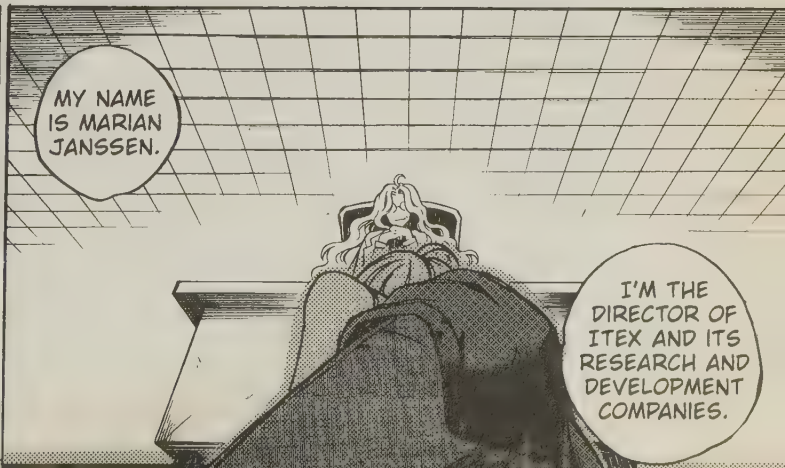
IT'S VERY
IMPORTANT
THAT WE
SPEAK,
FACE-TO-
FACE.

DON'T YOU
THINK SO?

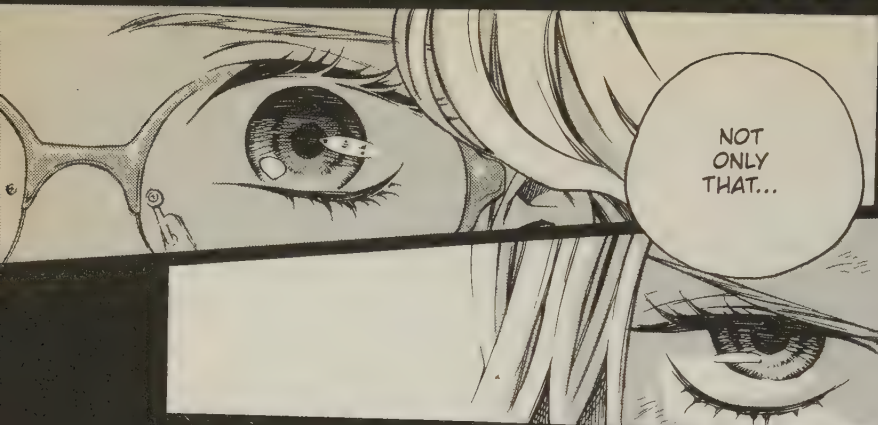


WELL, WHAT'S
IMPORTANT IS
THAT YOU
BELIEVE THAT.

MY NAME
IS MARIAN
JANSSEN.

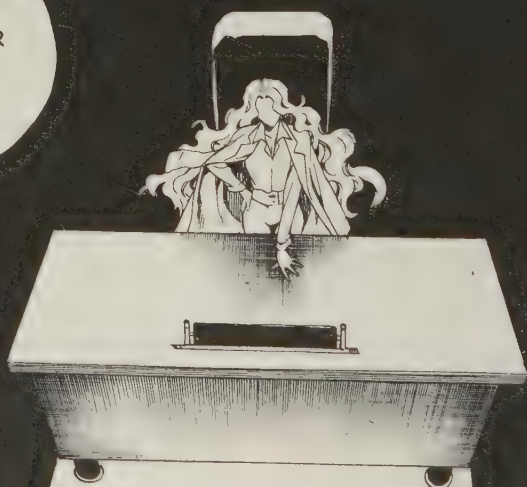


I'M THE
DIRECTOR OF
ITEX AND ITS
RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT
COMPANIES.



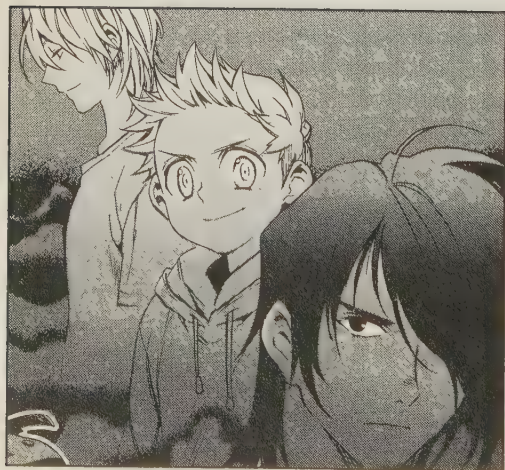
NOT
ONLY
THAT...

...BUT
I AM YOUR
MOTHER,
MAX.



!!

MAXIMUM
RIDE



MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 38



I AM...



...YOUR
MOTHER,
MAX.

.....

HOO,
DELUSIONAL
MUCH?

I KNOW
IT'S HARD
TO BELIEVE,
BUT LOOK
CLOSELY AT
ME.

I'M AN
OLDER
VERSION
OF YOU.

YEAH?

WHO DOES SHE
REMINDE ME OF?

I DON'T
HAVE ANY
AVIAN
DNA.

BUT YOU—
YOU WERE THE
MOST BRILLIANT
SUCCESS WE
EVER HAD.

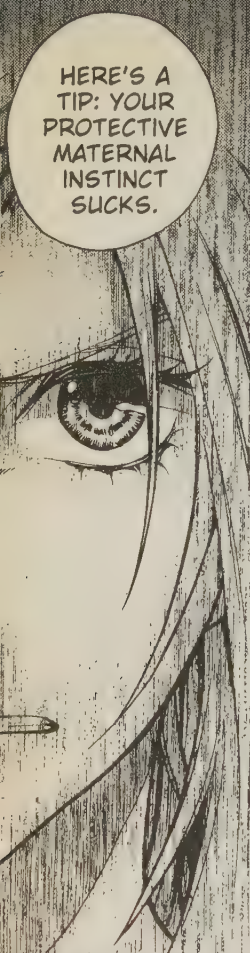
LET'S
SEE
YOUR
WINGS.

THEN WHY
DO YOU AND
TER BORCHT
KEEP TRYING
TO KILL US?

YOU'RE
AN OLDER
GENERATION,
MAX.

YOU
HAVE NO
PROVEN
LIFE
SPAN.

THERE'S NO
ROOM FOR
MISTAKES
IN THE NEW
WORLD.



HERE'S A
TIP: YOUR
PROTECTIVE
MATERNAL
INSTINCT
SUCKS.

I'M YOUR
MOTHER...

...BUT I'M
ALSO A
SCIENTIST.

TAP
TAP

BELIEVE ME,
WATCHING YOU
GROW UP FROM
AFAR, DEVISING
THIS ENTIRE
GAME, THIS
SERIES OF
TESTS...

...THERE WERE
TIMES THAT I
DIDN'T THINK I
COULD GO
THROUGH WITH IT.

FUNNY, I
FELT THE
SAME WAY.
FOR COM-
PLETELY
DIFFERENT
REASONS.

BUT YOU
HAD A
CHOICE.

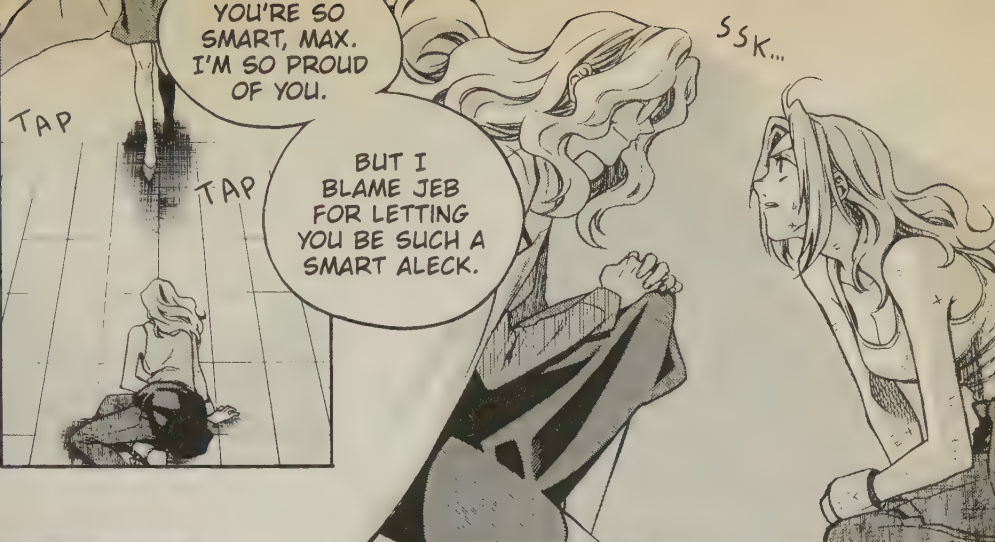
I'M MAKING
THE ULTIMATE
SACRIFICE
TO CREATE A
NEW WORLD.

I GAVE MY
ONLY CHILD
TO THE
CAUSE.

THAT'S
NOT THE
ULTIMATE
SACRIFICE!

GIVING
YOURSELF
WOULD
BE THE
ULTIMATE!

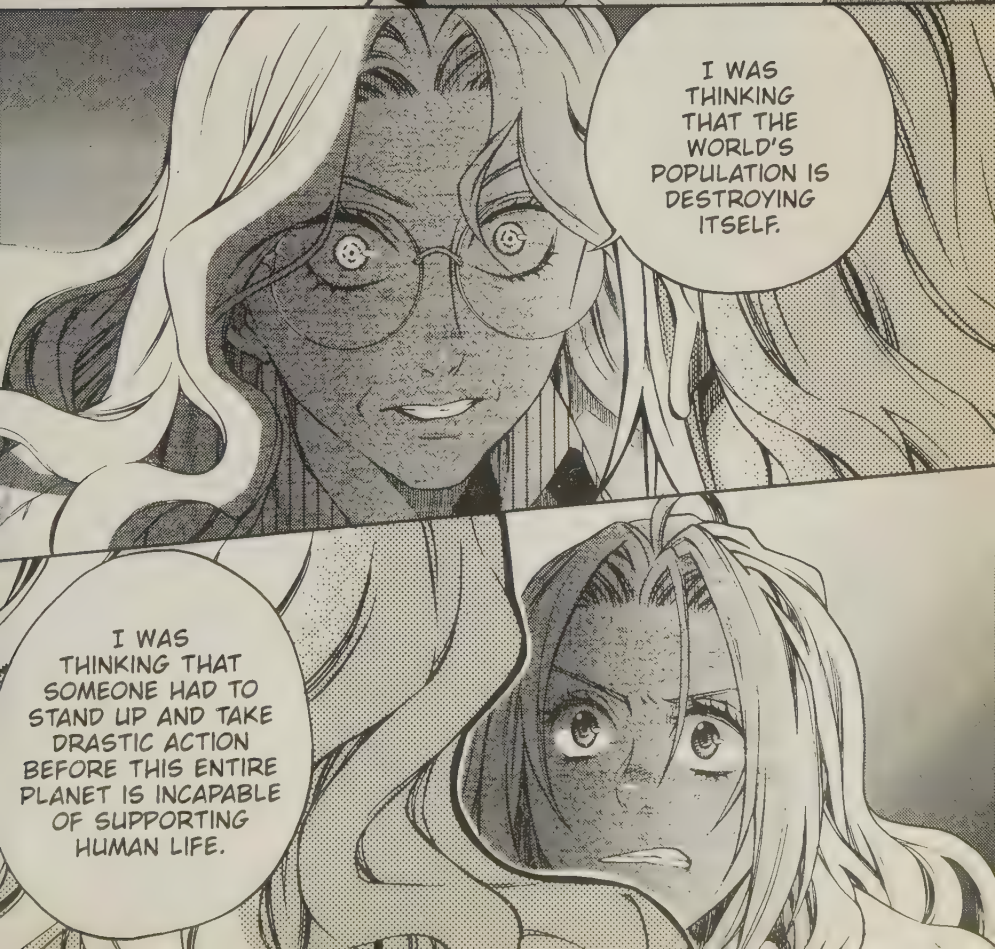
GIVING ME UP
IS LIKE THE
SECOND-TO-
ULTIMATE!
SEE THE
DIFFERENCE!



YOU'RE SO
SMART, MAX.
I'M SO PROUD
OF YOU.

BUT I
BLAME JEB
FOR LETTING
YOU BE SUCH A
SMART ALECK.

SSK...



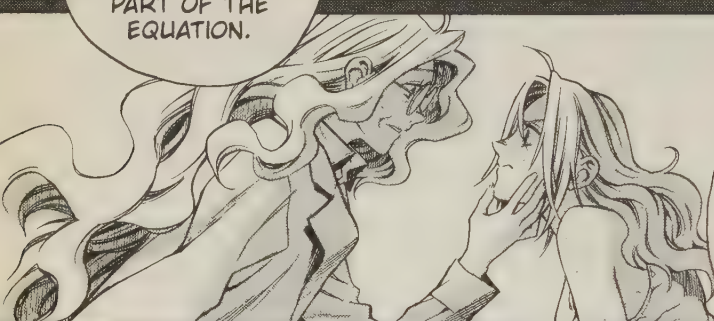
I WAS
THINKING
THAT THE
WORLD'S
POPULATION IS
DESTROYING
ITSELF.

I WAS
THINKING THAT
SOMEONE HAD TO
STAND UP AND TAKE
DRASTIC ACTION
BEFORE THIS ENTIRE
PLANET IS INCAPABLE
OF SUPPORTING
HUMAN LIFE.

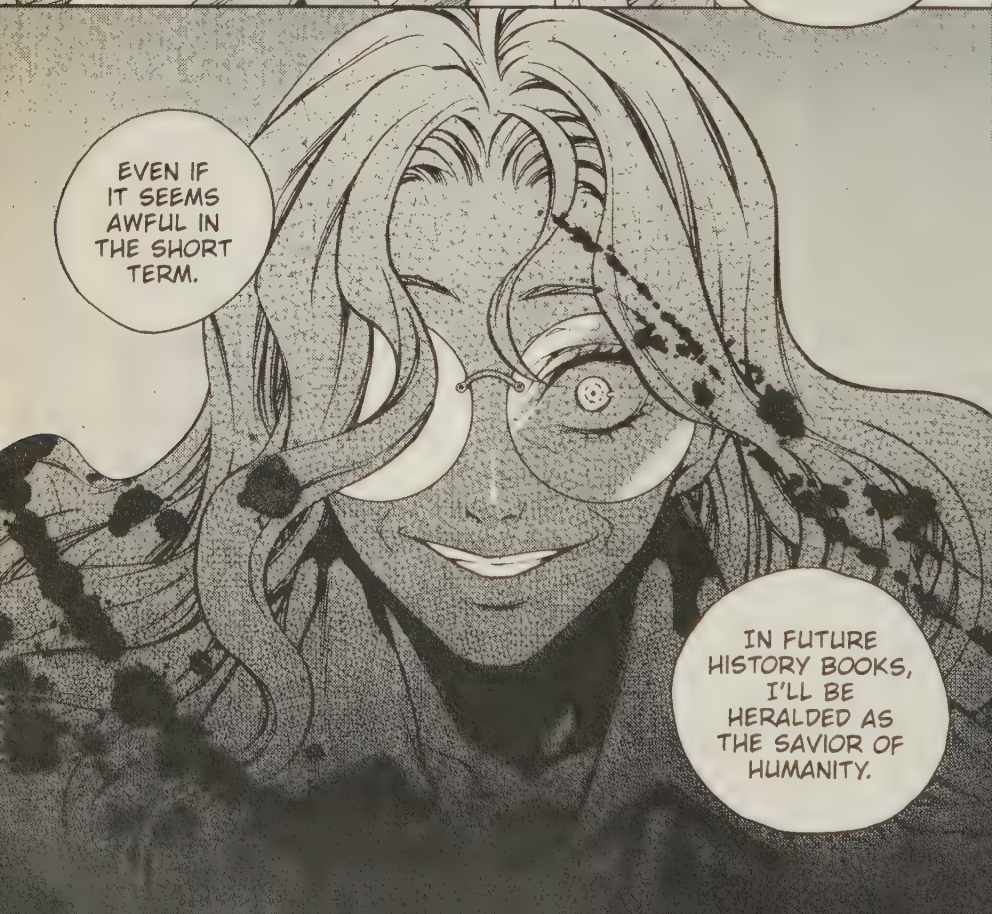


YES,
YOU'RE MY
DAUGHTER...

...BUT
YOU'RE STILL
JUST PART OF
THE BIG PICTURE,
PART OF THE
EQUATION.

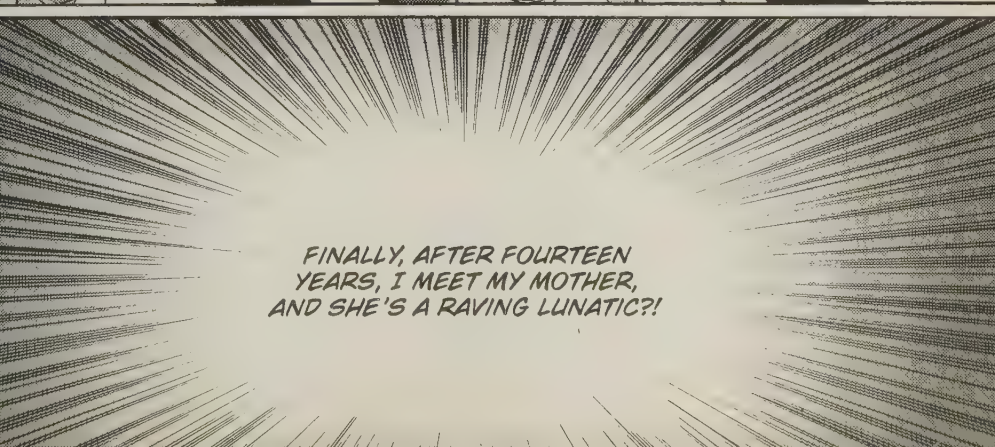
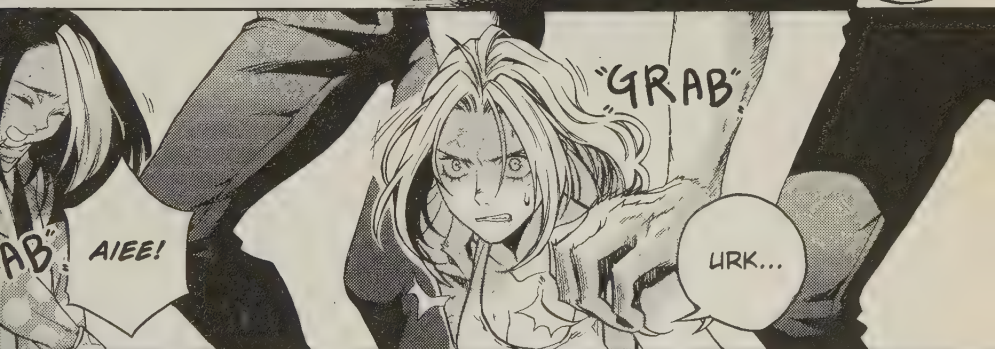


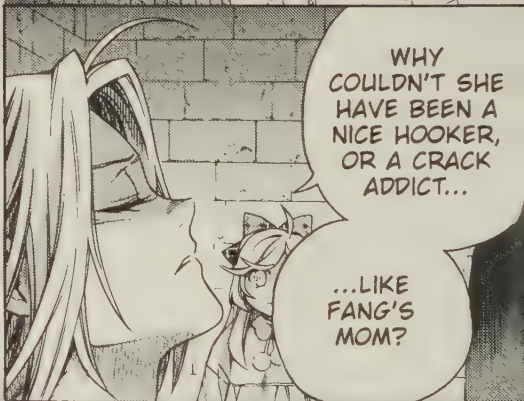
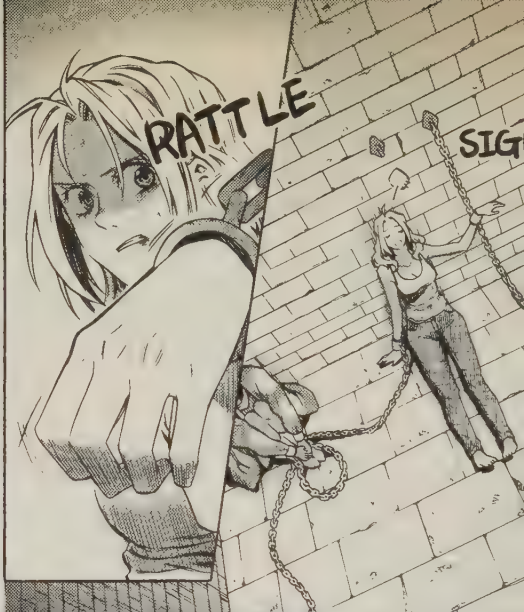
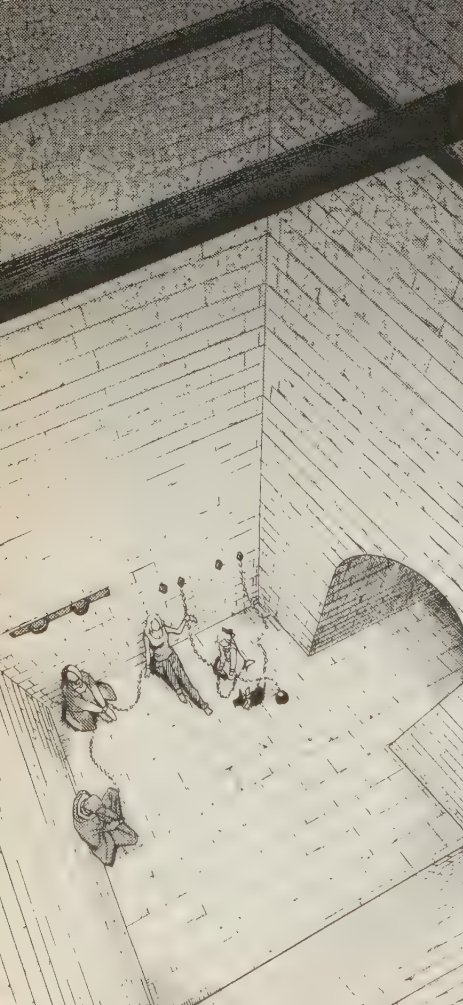
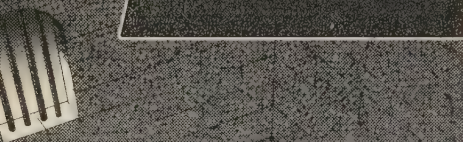
I WAS
THINKING I'D
DO ANYTHING
TO MAKE SURE
THE HUMAN
RACE
SURVIVES.



EVEN IF
IT SEEMS
AWFUL IN
THE SHORT
TERM.

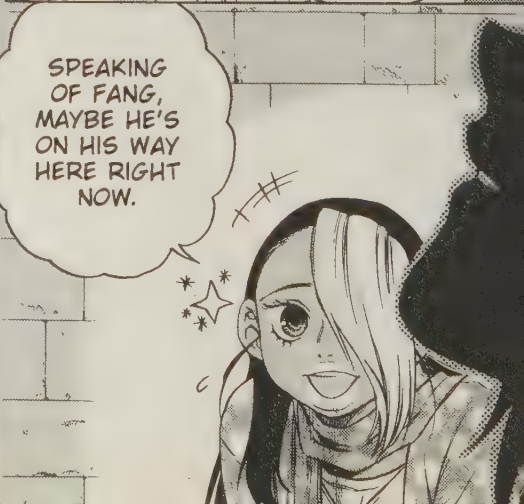
IN FUTURE
HISTORY BOOKS,
I'LL BE
HERALDED AS
THE SAVIOR OF
HUMANITY.





WHY
COULDN'T SHE
HAVE BEEN A
NICE HOOKER,
OR A CRACK
ADDICT...

...LIKE
FANG'S
MOM?



SPEAKING
OF FANG,
MAYBE HE'S
ON HIS WAY
HERE RIGHT
NOW.



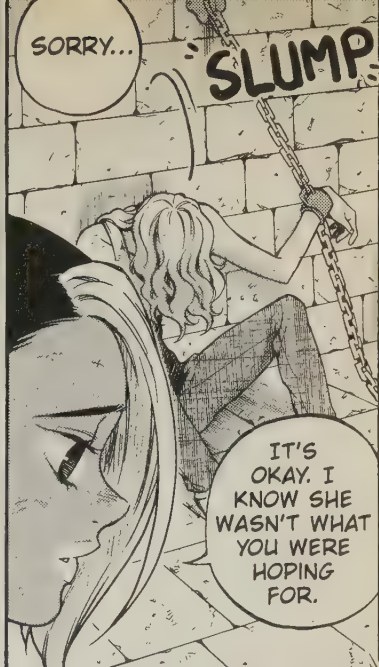
YEAH, IF OUR MESSAGE GOT THROUGH. IF THEY CAN SOMEHOW GET TO EUROPE, LIKE, RIGHT AWAY.

MAX?

YOU'RE KIND OF MAKING THINGS WORSE.



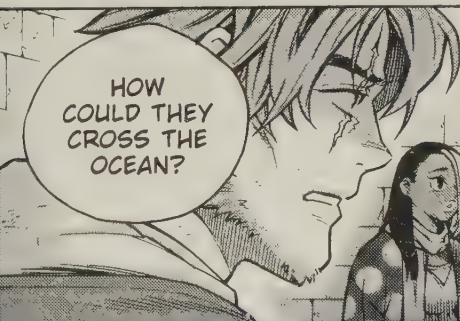
I'LL SOB MY GUTS OUT LATER. NEED TO KEEP IT TOGETHER RIGHT NOW.



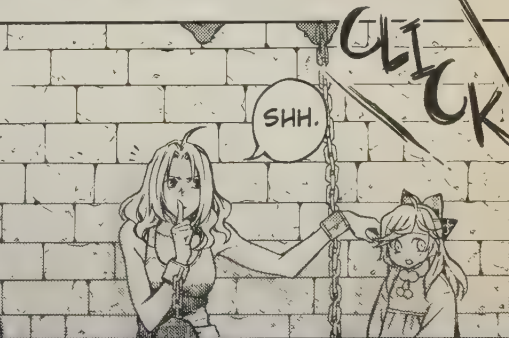
SORRY...

SLUMP

IT'S OKAY. I KNOW SHE WASN'T WHAT YOU WERE HOPING FOR.



HOW COULD THEY CROSS THE OCEAN?

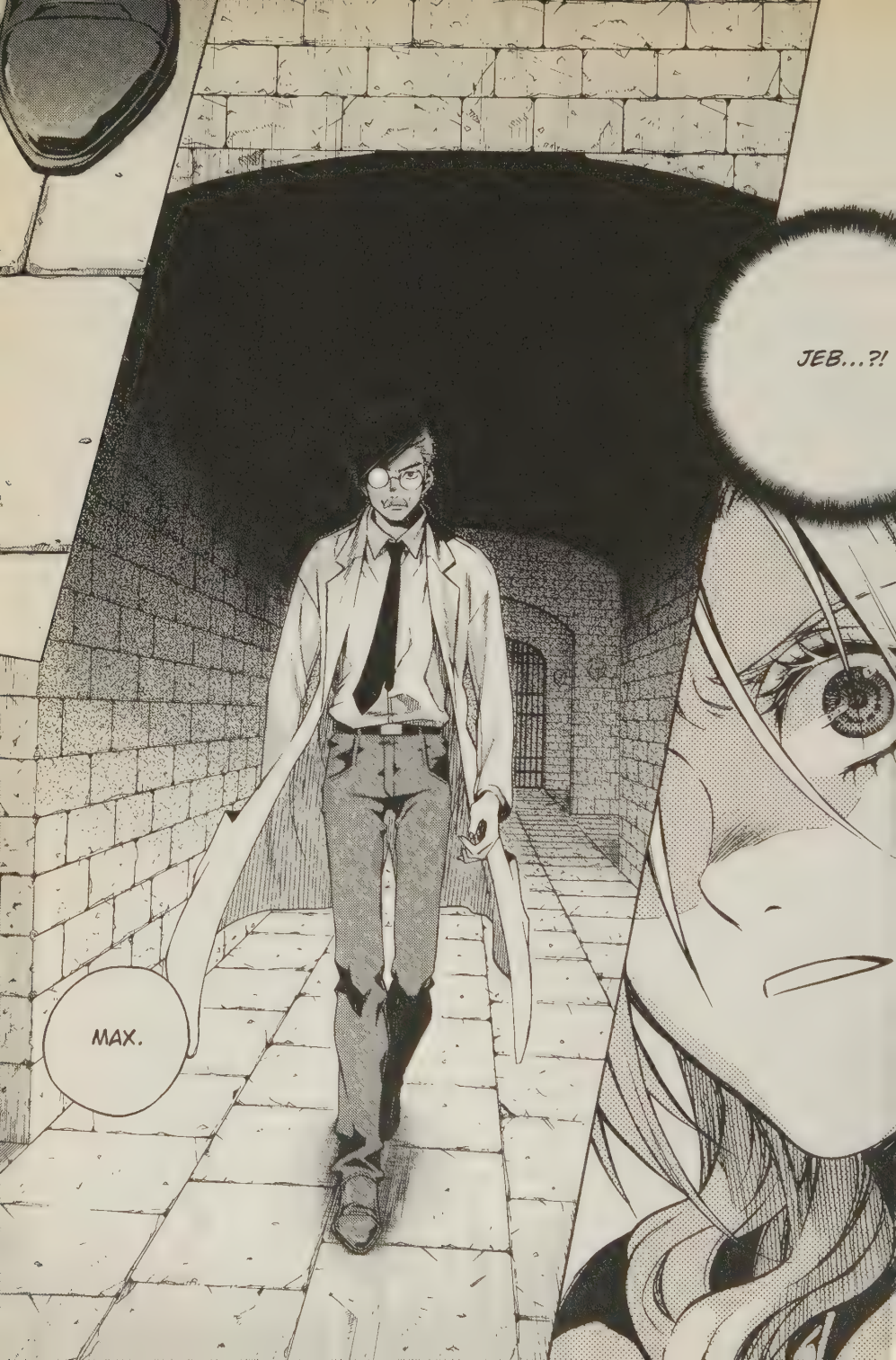


SHH.

CLICK



WHAT'S THAT SOUND?



JEB...?!

MAX.



WELL, WELL,
FANCY
MEETING YOU.

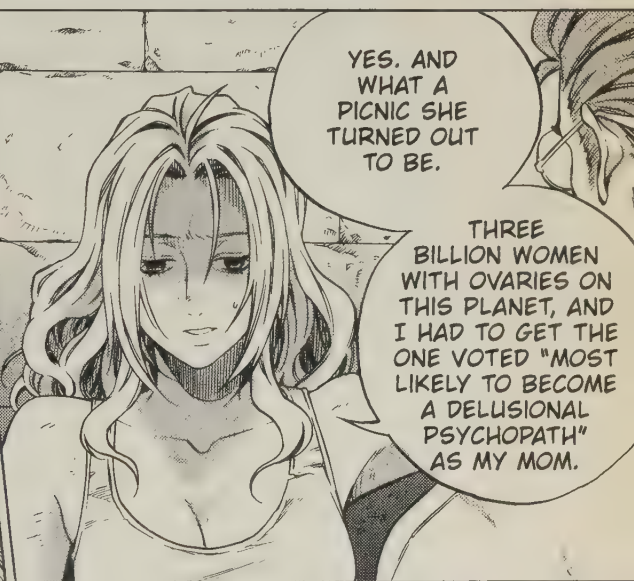
ACTUALLY,
NO ONE
KNOWS
I'M HERE.

COME
HERE
OFTEN?
HOW'S THE
FOOD?



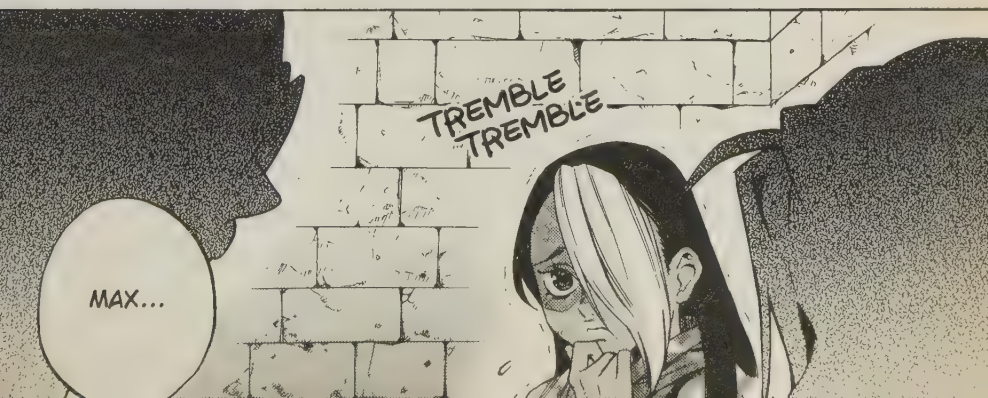
SO YOU
MET THE
DIRECTOR?

SSK...



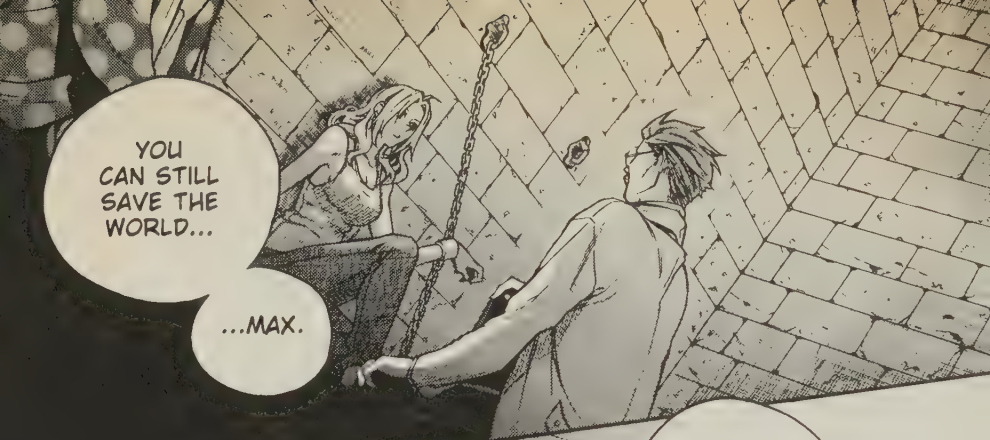
YES. AND
WHAT A
PICNIC SHE
TURNED OUT
TO BE.

THREE
BILLION WOMEN
WITH OVARIES ON
THIS PLANET, AND
I HAD TO GET THE
ONE VOTED "MOST
LIKELY TO BECOME
A DELUSIONAL
PSYCHOPATH"
AS MY MOM.



TREMBLE
TREMBLE

MAX...



A man and a woman are in a room with stone walls. The woman is sitting on a ledge, looking down. The man is standing, looking up at the ceiling. A chain is attached to the ceiling and hangs down.

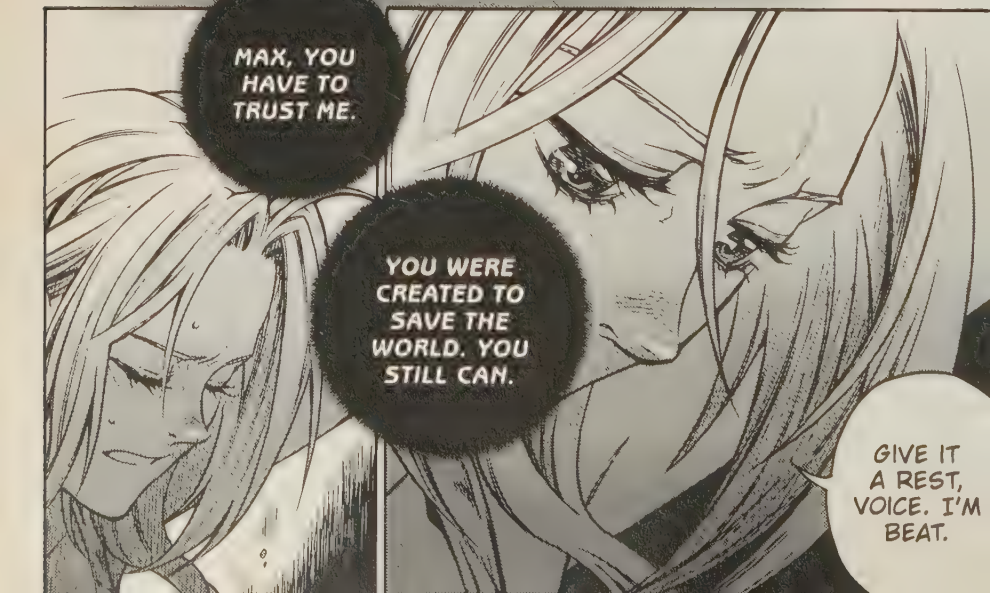
YOU
CAN STILL
SAVE THE
WORLD...

...MAX.

HOW?

THROUGH
RE-EVOLUTION?
THE BY-HALF
PLAN?

NO,
THANKS.



A close-up of a woman's face. She has long, light-colored hair and is looking down with a sad expression. Her eyes are closed.

MAX, YOU
HAVE TO
TRUST ME.

YOU WERE
CREATED TO
SAVE THE
WORLD. YOU
STILL CAN.

GIVE IT
A REST,
VOICE. I'M
BEAT.

MAX
MAX

MAX!!

!

BOLT

YOU'VE
COME A
LONG WAY,
MAX.

YOU'RE
ALMOST
HOME.
EVERYTHING
WILL WORK
OUT...

JEB
WAS THE
VOICE...?!

...BUT YOU
HAVE TO DO
YOUR BEST.
AND YOU
HAVE TO
TRUST ME
AGAIN.





FANG.

ARE KIDS
STILL
READING
YOUR
BLOG?

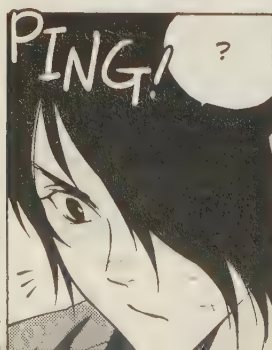
I feel like I could
fly, like, to the
space station!



TONS.

AND NO
MORE
CAFFEINE
FOR YOU,
GAZZY.

'KAY.



PING! ?

FLASH!

AN URGENT MAIL



(THIS IS FROM MAX...)

S IS FROM MAX. READ IT NOW!

THIS IS FROM MAX.

Delete

Reply

Forward

Spam

Print

THIS IS FROM MAX. READ IT NOW!!!!

This message contains blocked images.

We're in Germany. Town of Lendeheim.
Big castle here, head of IteX. Lots of really bad stuff.
Come as fast as you can.
(Hi Fang! From Nudge. I miss you!)
Do NOT blow this off. Come!!! We have days, maybe hours.
I mean it, you better get your butt over here.

-Max

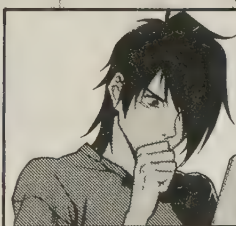
FLASH!!

MAX
WANTS ME
BACK, EH?

WHAT ARE
THEY DOING
IN GERMANY?
HOW DID THEY
GET TO
EUROPE?

HOW DOES
SHE EXPECT
ME TO GET
TO EUROPE?

.....



THE E-MAIL
WAS SENT
EARLY THIS
MORNING.

GERMANY'S
ABOUT TEN
HOURS OR
SO AHEAD.

WHAT'S
"REALLY
BAD
STUFF"?

STUFF BAD
ENOUGH TO
MAKE HER
SWALLOW HER
PRIDE AND ASK
ME TO COME
HELP?

TAPPA

SO IT MUST
BE PRETTY
UNIMAGINABLY
BAD.

TAPPA
TAPP

TAPPA

[Blog Posts](#) [Discussions](#) [Groups](#) [Photos](#)

URGENT! WE WANT OUR PLANET BACK!

TAPP

Hey. If you get this message, we might have a chance. I mean the world might have a chance. Long story short: The grown-ups have taken a nice clean planet and trashed it for money. Not every grown-up. But a bunch of them, over and over, choose money and profits over clean air and water. It's their way of telling us they don't give a rat's butt about us, the kids, who are going to inherit what's left of the Earth.

A group of scientists want to take back the planet before it's too late and stop the pollution. Good, right? Only problem is they think they need to get rid of half the world's population to do it. So it's like: Save the planet so the pollution doesn't kill people, or . . . just kill people to start with, save everyone time. For you kids at home, that's called "flawed logic." I mean, call me crazy, but that seems like a really bad plan.

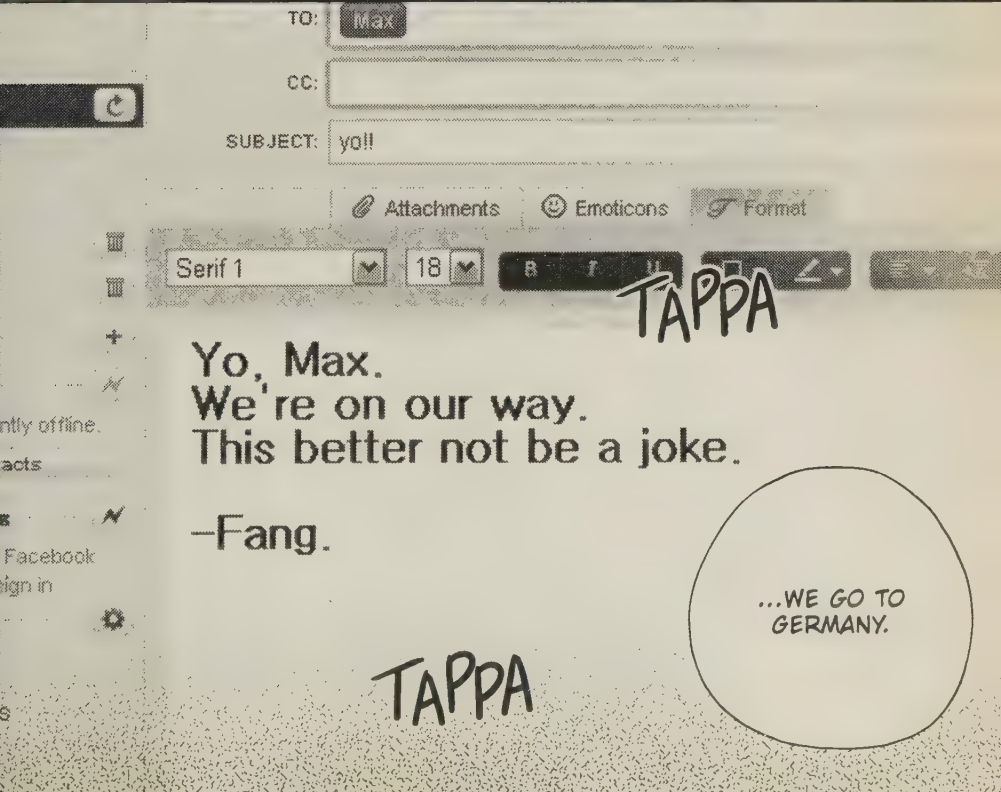
The other thing about these scientists is that they've tried to create a new kind of human who might survive better, like if there's a nuclear winter or whatever. I won't go into the details, but let me just say that this idea is as boneheaded and dangerous as their "Kill Half the People" plan.

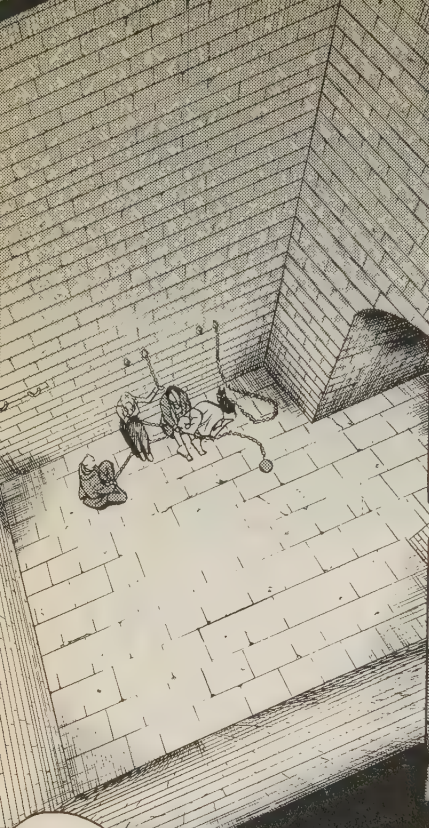
What I'm saying is: It's up to us. You and me. Me and my flock, you and your friends. The kids. We want — we deserve — to inherit a clean, unmessed-up planet, and still keep everyone who's already living on it. We can do it. But we have to join together. We have to take chances. Take risks. We have to get active and really do something, instead of just sitting at home playing Xbox. This isn't a game. We can't defeat the enemy by hitting them with our superlaser guns.

We want our planet back.

Kids matter. We're important. Our future is important.

ARE YOU WITH ME?





MAX?

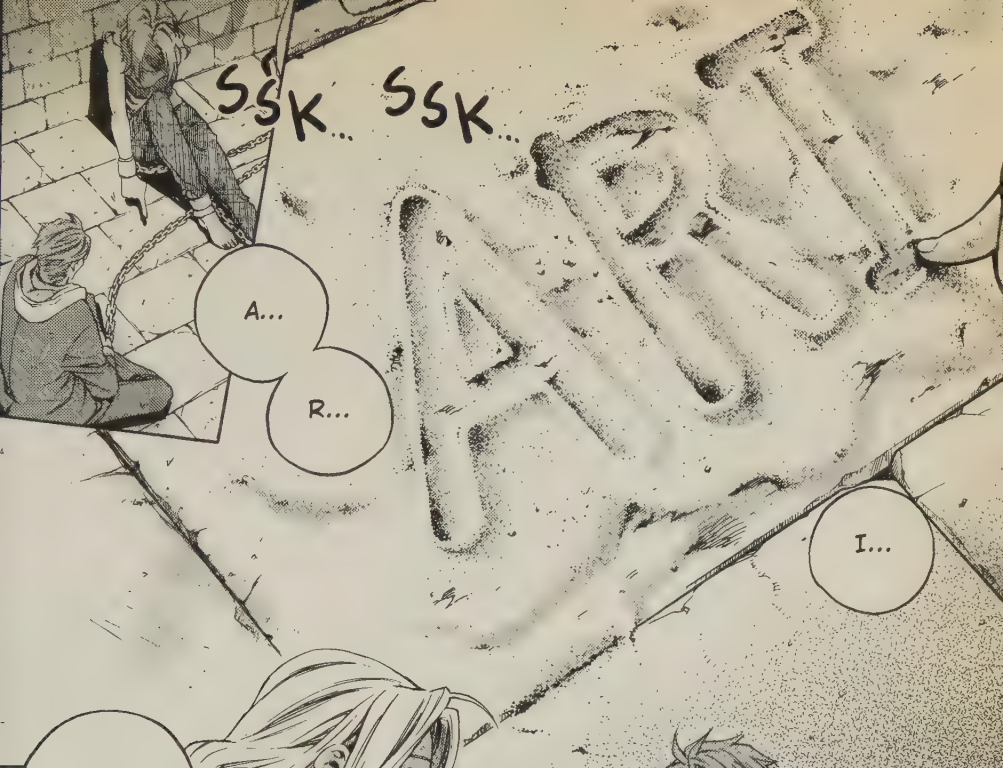
YOU
OKAY?



I CAN'T
READ...

ARI?

YEAH?



A...

R...

I...

THAT
SPELLS
ARI.

NOW
YOU DO
IT.

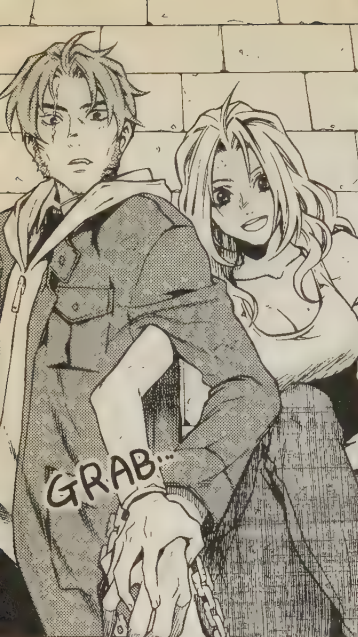
WHAT'S
THE
POINT?

*HE
DOESN'T
HAVE MUCH
TIME LEFT.*

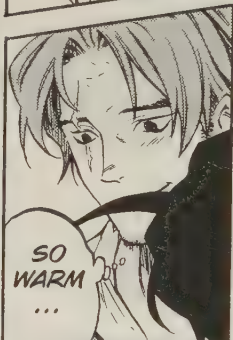
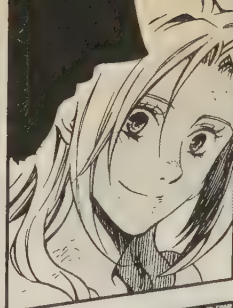
*DOES IT
REALLY
MATTER IF HE
KNOWS HOW
TO READ?*

YOU
SHOULD
KNOW HOW
TO WRITE
YOUR NAME.

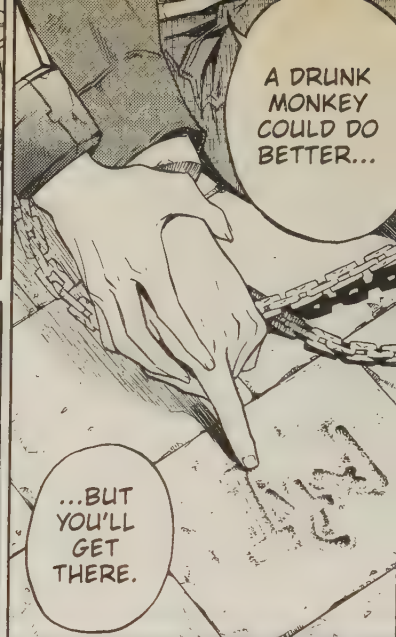
COME
ON.
FIRST



GRAB...

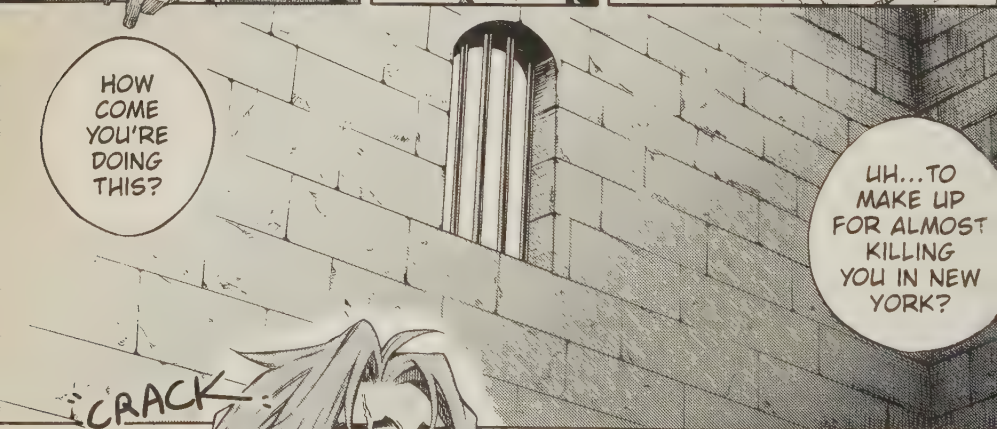


SO
WARM
...



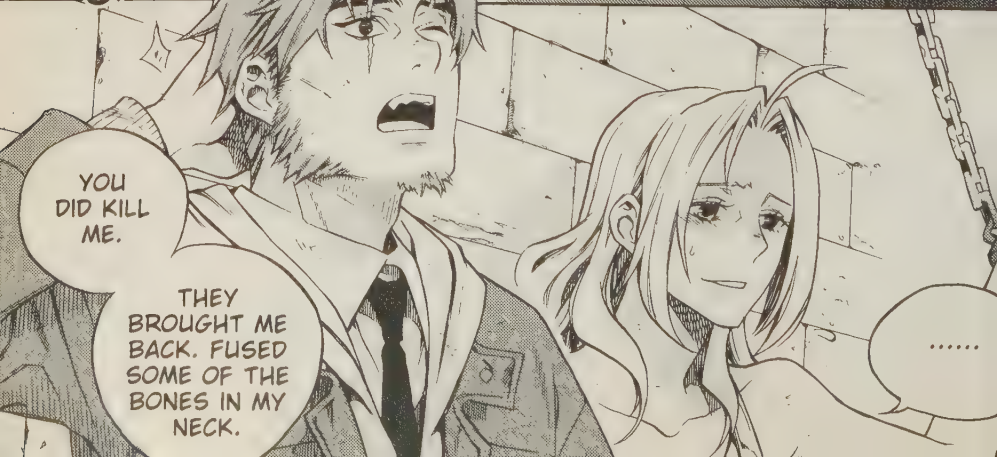
A DRUNK
MONKEY
COULD DO
BETTER...

...BUT
YOU'LL
GET
THERE.



HOW
COME
YOU'RE
DOING
THIS?

UH...TO
MAKE UP
FOR ALMOST
KILLING
YOU IN NEW
YORK?



YOU
DID KILL
ME.

THEY
BROUGHT ME
BACK. FUSED
SOME OF THE
BONES IN MY
NECK.

.....



.....

I'M
SORRY.

...BUT
YOU WERE
TRYING TO
KILL ME
FIRST.

HA-HA
TRUE.



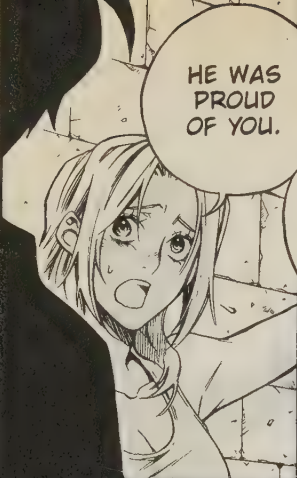
I HATED
YOU.

DAD
GAVE YOU
EVERYTHING.
HE REALLY
LOVED YOU.

I WAS
HIS SON,
AND I
DIDN'T MEAN
ANYTHING
TO HIM.

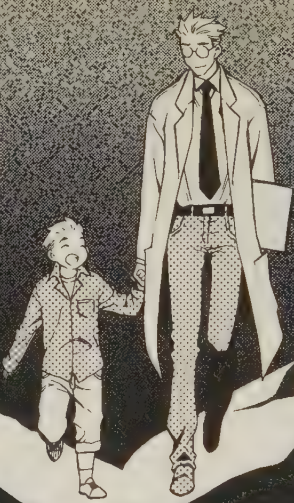
YOU WERE SO
STRONG AND
PERFECT AND
BEAUTIFUL. I
JUST HATED
YOU.

I WANTED
YOU DEAD.

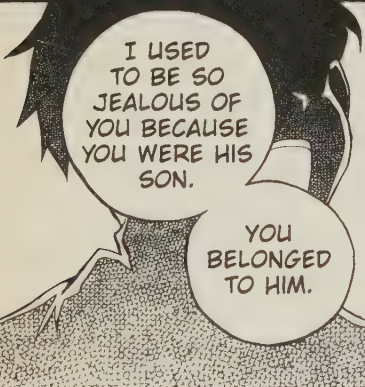


HE WAS
PROUD
OF YOU.

HE
LIKED YOU
FOLLOWING
HIM AROUND
IN THE LAB.

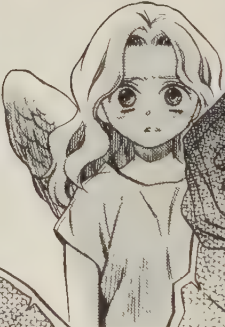


YOU
WERE A
CUTE LITTLE
BOY.

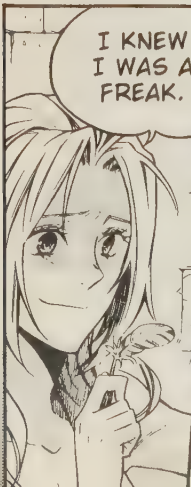


I USED
TO BE SO
JEALOUS OF
YOU BECAUSE
YOU WERE HIS
SON.

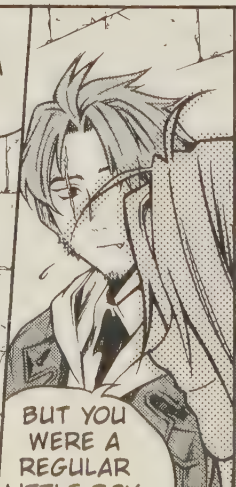
YOU
BELONGED
TO HIM.



I WANTED
TO BE
PERFECT SO
JEB WOULD
LOVE ME.



I KNEW
I WAS A
FREAK.



BUT YOU
WERE A
REGULAR

I KEPT
THINKING, IF
I'M STRONG
ENOUGH, IF I
DO EVERYTHING
JEB TELLS
ME...

...IF I'M
THE BEST
AT EVERY-
THING...



...THEN
MAYBE I
WILL LOVE
ME TOO

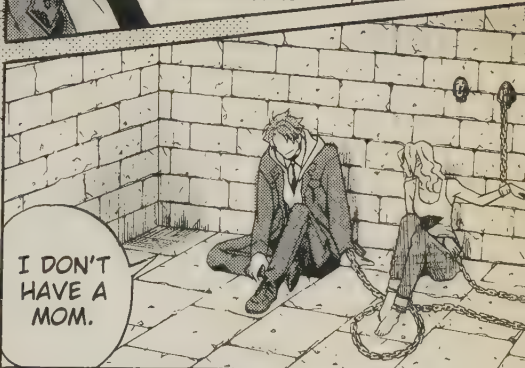
I WAS SO,
SO HAPPY
WHEN HE
STOLE US
FROM THE
LAB.

I DIDN'T
THINK IT
COULD LAST,
BUT IT WAS
ALMOST LIKE A
NORMAL LIFE,
LIKE NORMAL
KIDS.



I WAS SO
HAPPY TO BE
GONE THAT I
DIDN'T EVEN THINK
ABOUT THE LITTLE
BOY HE'D LEFT
BEHIND.

I GUESS I
JUST THOUGHT
YOU WERE WITH
YOUR MOM OR
SOMETHING.

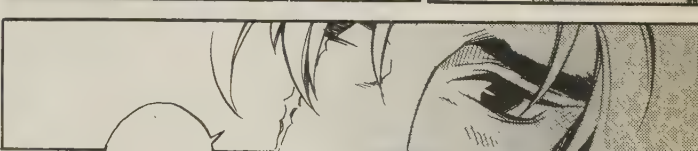


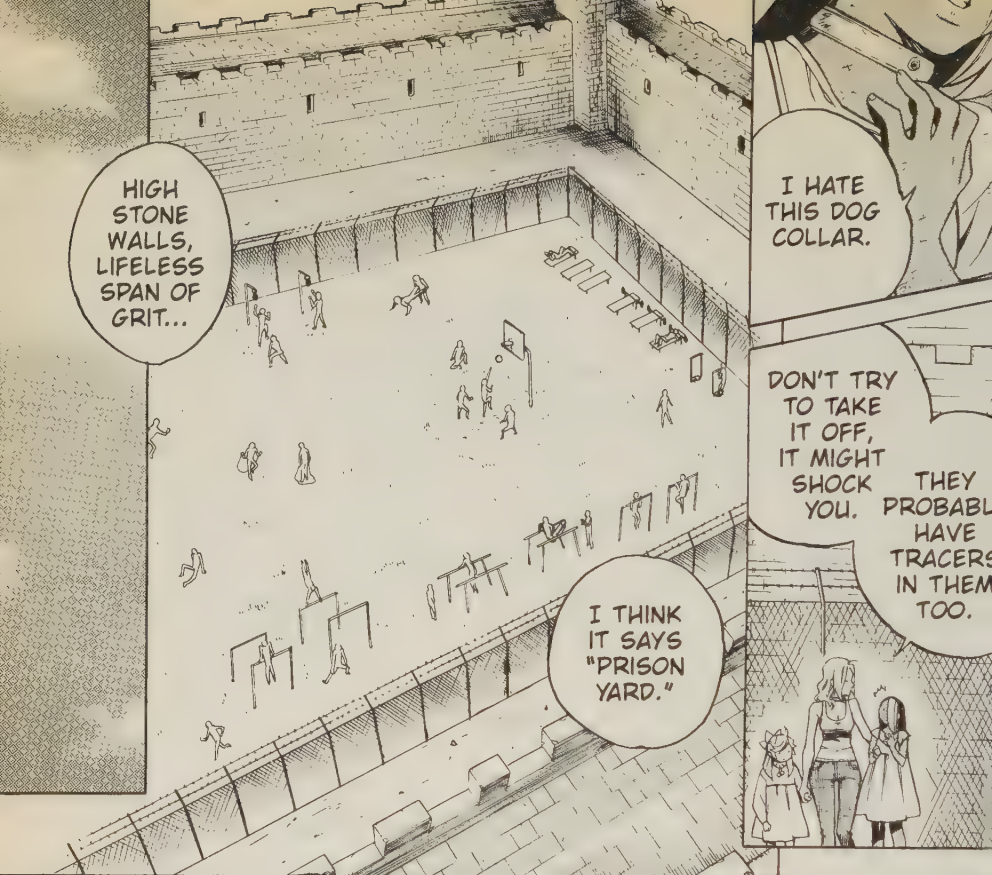
I DON'T
HAVE A
MOM.

I UNDER-
STAND NOW.
IT WASN'T
YOUR FAULT.

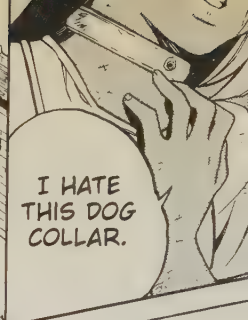


YOU
WERE JUST
A KID, LIKE
ME.

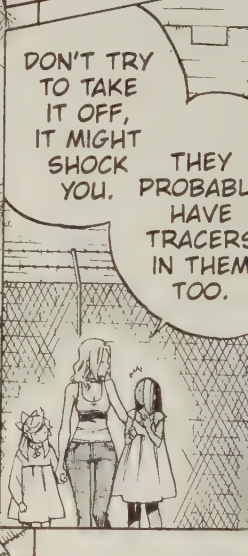




HIGH
STONE
WALLS,
LIFELESS
SPAN OF
GRIT...

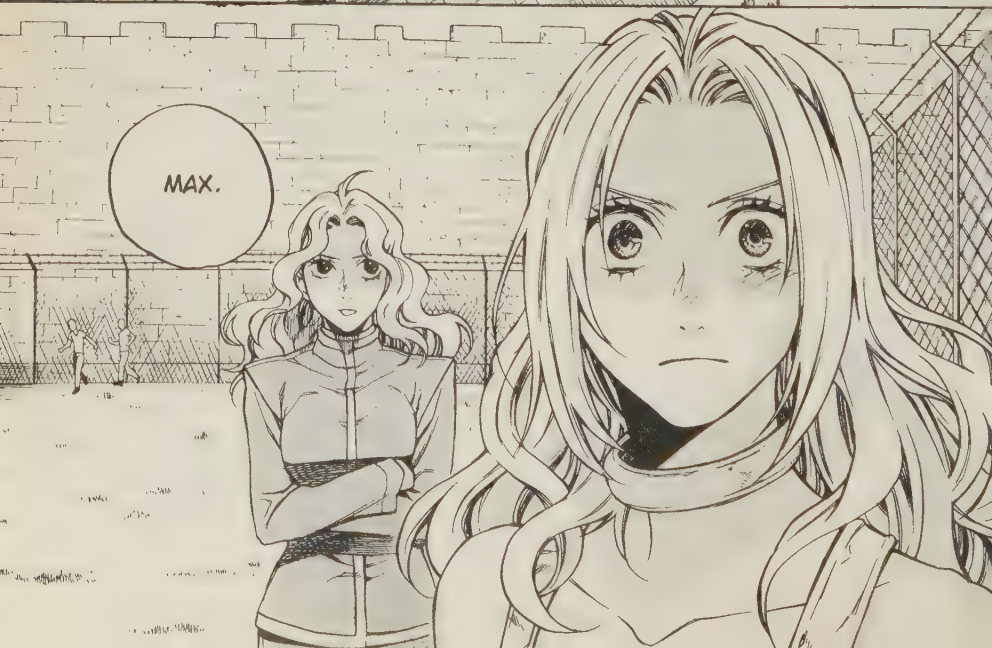


I HATE
THIS DOG
COLLAR.

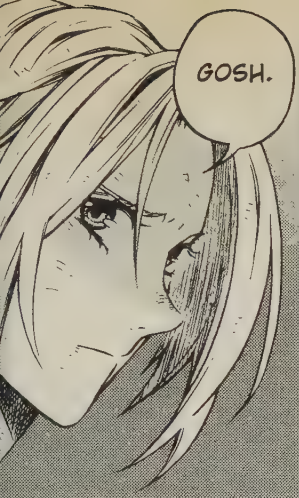


DON'T TRY
TO TAKE
IT OFF,
IT MIGHT
SHOCK
YOU. THEY
PROBABLY
HAVE
TRACERS
IN THEM
TOO.

I THINK
IT SAYS
"PRISON
YARD."



MAX.



GOSH.

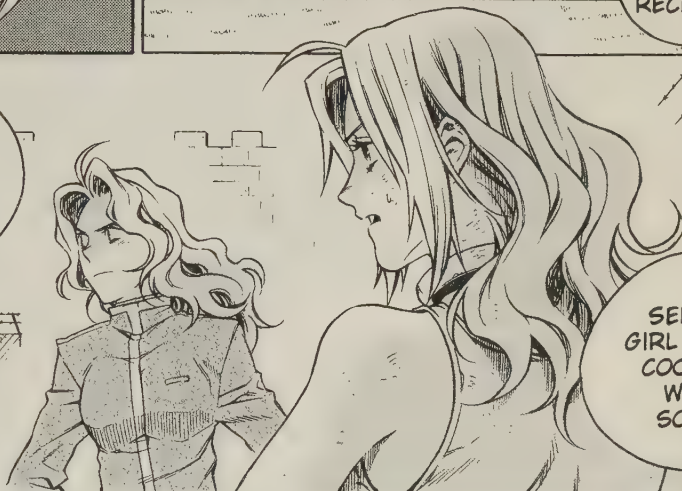


IT'S LIKE
LOOKING IN
A MIRROR.

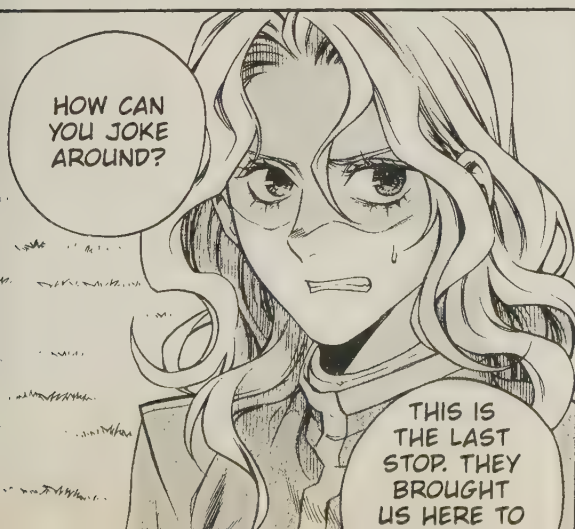
YEAH,
EXCEPT
I'VE HAD A
BATH
RECENTLY.



ANYWAY,
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?

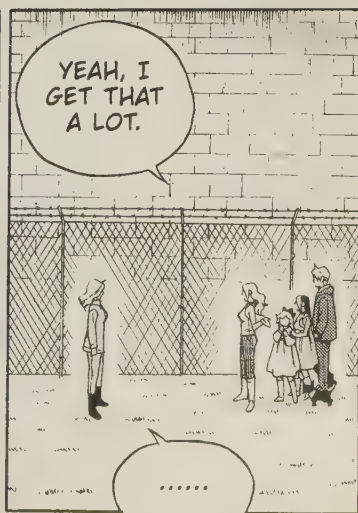


SELLING
GIRL SCOUT
COOKIES.
WANT
SOME?



HOW CAN
YOU JOKE
AROUND?

THIS IS
THE LAST
STOP. THEY
BROUGHT
US HERE TO



YEAH, I
GET THAT
A LOT.



YOU
DON'T
UNDER-
STAND.

WE'RE ALL
SLATED TO
DIE. EVERY
DAY, MORE
OF US
DISAPPEAR.

WHEN I
FIRST CAME
HERE, THIS
YARD WAS
SO FULL, WE
HAD TO TAKE
SHIFTS.

NOW
THIS IS
ALL THAT'S
LEFT.

WITH THIS
MANY OF
US...

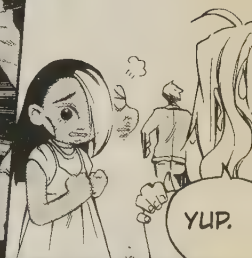
...WE'LL
MAYBE HAVE
UNTIL
TOMORROW!

I THOUGHT
WE'D HAVE A
COUPLE DAYS
TO REGROUP,
FIND A WAY
OUT OF THIS.

IF MAX II
ISN'T LYING,
THEN I NEED
TO STEP UP
OUR TIME
FRAME IN A
BIG WAY.



WHAT WAS THAT? ARE YOU OKAY, MAX?



A PIECE OF PAPER?



WHAT'S THAT —

SHOCK!

MAX? WHAT'S WRONG?



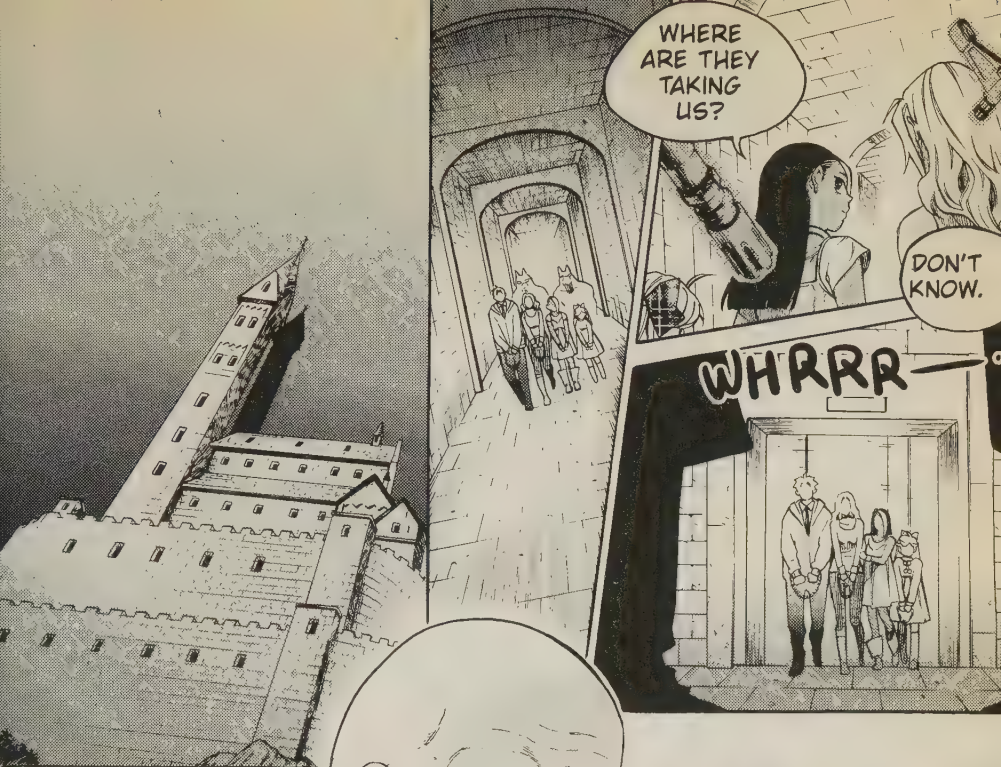
YOU'RE
CRYING.

Fang on his way
with flock.
Says it better not
be a job!

FANG'S
COMING TO
HELP US.



HE'S ON
HIS WAY.



WHERE
ARE THEY
TAKING
US?

DON'T
KNOW.

WHRRR—



AH.

I WANT
TO TALK
TO YOU.
VUN LAST
TIME.

ARGH~

I hate
this guy.

There's a
Haters of ter
Borch Club. Have
you gotten your
badge yet?



I VASS
VERRY
DISAPPOINTED
DAT YOU ARE
NOT DEAD BY
NOW!

SOME
PEOPLE
VANT TO
TALK TO
YOU.

DAY
VANT
TO BUY
YOU.

HMPH!

VEE
FEEL DE
SAME VAY
ABOUT
YOU!

TSK!

AH,
HALLO.

WE WILL
ASK YOU SOME
QUESTIONS, OKAY?
TELL US ABOUT
YOUR SENSE OF
DIRECTION. HOW
DOES IT WORK?

BEEP
BEEP

WELL, IT'S
LIKE I HAVE
A GPS INSIDE
ME. ONE OF
THE TALKING
ONES.

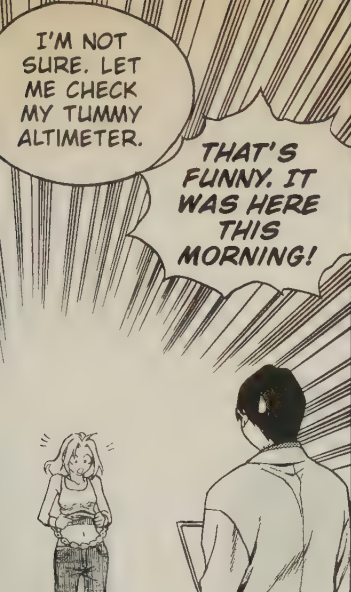
IT TELLS
ME, GO TWENTY
MILES, TURN LEFT,
TAKE EXIT NINETY-
FOUR, AND SO ON.
IT CAN BE PRETTY
BOSSY, FRANKLY.

NO, YOU IDIOT. I
DON'T KNOW HOW
IT WORKS. I JUST
KNOW IT POINTS ME
IN THE OPPOSITE
DIRECTION OF BONE-
HEADS.

REALLY?

KE=KE-KE

HOW HIGH
CAN YOU
FLY?

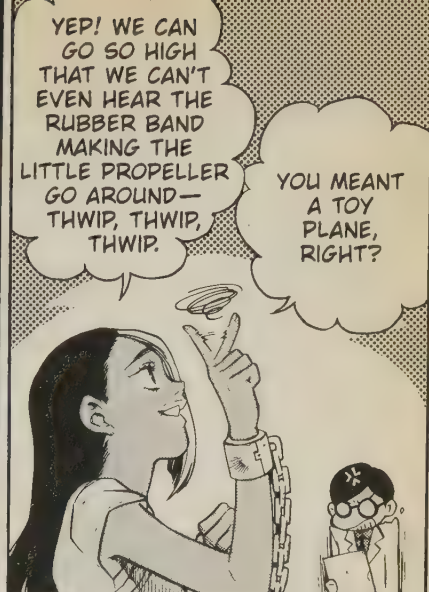


I'M NOT SURE. LET ME CHECK MY TUMMY ALTIMETER.

THAT'S FUNNY. IT WAS HERE THIS MORNING!



UGH...AS HIGH AS A PLANE?



YEP! WE CAN GO SO HIGH THAT WE CAN'T EVEN HEAR THE RUBBER BAND MAKING THE LITTLE PROPELLER GO AROUND—THWIP, THWIP, THWIP.

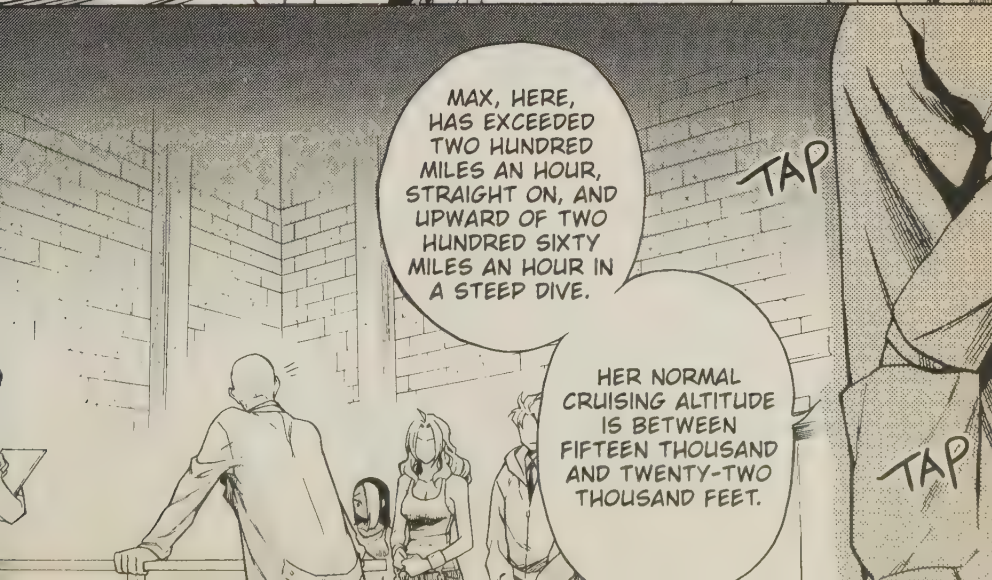
YOU MEANT A TOY PLANE, RIGHT?



ENUFF!

YOU VILL GET NOVERE VIS DESE FAILURES!

SHRIEK!



MAX, HERE, HAS EXCEEDED TWO HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR, STRAIGHT ON, AND UPWARD OF TWO HUNDRED SIXTY MILES AN HOUR IN A STEEP DIVE.

HER NORMAL CRUISING ALTITUDE IS BETWEEN FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND TWENTY-TWO THOUSAND FEET.

TAP

TAP



HOW MUCH
WEIGHT
CAN THEY
CARRY?

DO THEY
SWIM
WELL?

THEY CAN
CARRY UP TO
FOUR-FIFTHS OF
THEIR OWN BODY
WEIGHT FOR UP
TO AN HOUR. AND
ONE-HALF OF THEIR
BODY WEIGHT
ALMOST INDEFI-
NITELY.

TAP

TAP

THEIR BONES
ARE EXTREMELY
LIGHT AND POROUS.
FILLED WITH TINY AIR
POCKETS, AND THEY
HAVE PERIPHERAL
AIR SACS ALONG
EACH SIDE. THEY
DON'T SINK.

OKAY,
THIS IS
STUPID.

THERE'S
NO POINT IN
DISCUSSING
THIS...

...BECAUSE
THERE'S NO WAY
WE'RE GOING
TO BE WEAPONS
FOR ANYONE.

BE SMART,
MAX.

DR. TER BORCHT
IS NOT THE ONLY
ONE WHO WANTS
YOU DEAD. WORKING
FOR THE CHINESE
IS YOUR ONE
OPPORTUNITY TO
CONTINUE LIVING.

HOW DO
YOU EVEN
LIVE WITH
YOURSELF?

YOU'RE
WILLING TO
SELL CHILDREN
TO A FOREIGN
GOVERNMENT SO
THEY CAN USE US
AS WEAPONS!

I DON'T GET IT.
WERE YOU HIDING
BEHIND A DOOR
ON MORALS AND
ETHICS DAY?

THEN YOU HAVE
THE GALL TO
CALL YOURSELF
MY MOTHER?

YOU'RE
CHILD,
MAX.

YOU CAN'T
SEE THE BIG
PICTURE.

YOU
STILL THINK
YOU'RE THE
CENTER OF THE
UNIVERSE.

I'LL TAKE
CARE OF THE
REST.

SNAP!

TAKE THEM
AWAY.

WHICH
MEANS WHAT?
THAT I'M
NOTHING?

IT'S TIME
YOU FOUND OUT
YOU'RE JUST A
SMALL SPECK IN
THE BIG SCHEME
OF THINGS.

THAT
YOU CAN DO
ANYTHING
YOU WANT TO
ME, AND IT'S
OKAY?

YOU'RE SO
FULL OF IT!
YOU PATHETIC,
COLD,
POINTLESS
WASTOID!

I'LL GIVE YOU
NIGHTMARES
FOR THE
REST OF
YOUR WASTED
LIFE!

YOU
CAN'T
HURT ME.

WHRRRR...

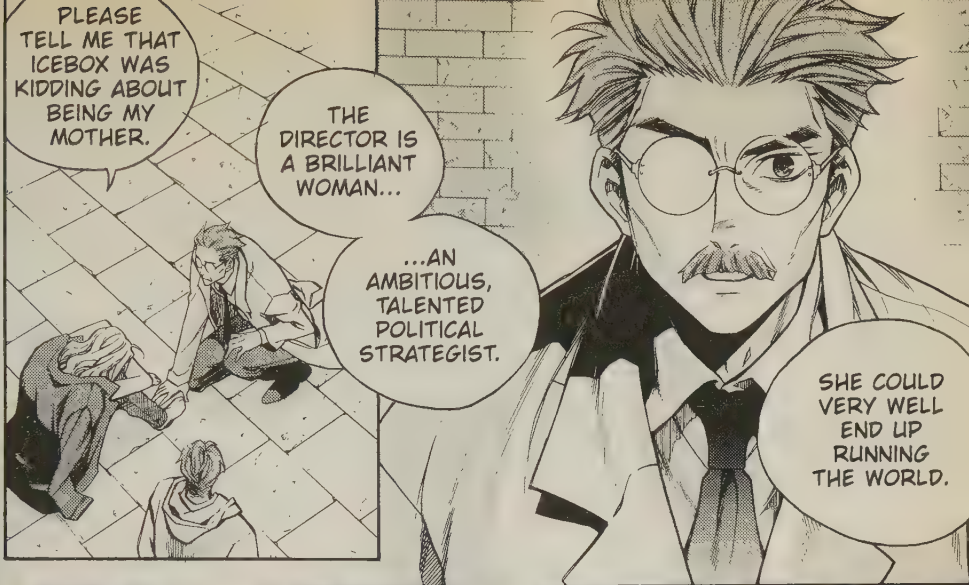
JUST
WAIT
AND
SEE!

I'LL
PROVE
YOU
WRONG!

WE ARE
HUMAN,
AND WE DO
MATTER!

YOUR
MOM'S
SUCH A
WITCH.

JEB.



PLEASE
TELL ME THAT
ICEBOX WAS
KIDDING ABOUT
BEING MY
MOTHER.

THE
DIRECTOR IS
A BRILLIANT
WOMAN...

...AN
AMBITIOUS,
TALENTED
POLITICAL
STRATEGIST.

SHE COULD
VERY WELL
END UP
RUNNING
THE WORLD.

AS HER
DAUGHTER, YOU
WOULD BE IN A
POSITION OF
UNIMAGINABLE
ADVANTAGE.

EXCEPT THAT
I WOULD HAVE
CHANGED MY NAME
AND DYED MY HAIR
AND WOULD BE LIVING
INCOGNITO TO AVOID
THE EMBARRASSEN
OF HAVING A POWER-
CRAZY DR. FRANKEN-
STEIN FOR A
MOTHER!

IF I HAD
THAT MUCH
POWER, THE
FIRST THING
I WOULD DO
IS SLAM HER
INTO JAIL.

EVEN IF
SHE WERE
THE MOST
POWERFUL
PERSON IN THE
WORLD AND
GAVE YOU
UNLIMITED
POWER TOO?

PLUS ALL
THE OTHERS
WHO LENT A
HAND TO THIS
HATEFUL GOLD-
FINGER PLAN
OF WORLD
DOMINATION.

PLUS,
I WOULD
SAY THAT ALL
WARS WOULD BE
FOUGHT ONLY WITH
SWORDS. NO GUNS,
NO MISSILES.

AND I
WOULD SEIZE
ALL THE HIDDEN
BANK ACCOUNTS
OF COMPANIES
AND PEOPLE WHO
HAD CONTRIBUTED
TO RUINING THE
ENVIRONMENT.

WITH THAT
MONEY, I WOULD
MAKE SURE THAT
HEALTH CARE AND
EDUCATION WERE
AVAILABLE TO
EVERYONE FOR
FREE.

PLUS,
HOUSING AND
FOOD FOR EVERY-
ONE. PEOPLE IN
THE GOVERNMENT
WHO STARTED
WARS WOULD BE
MADE TO WORK
IN THE FIELDS.

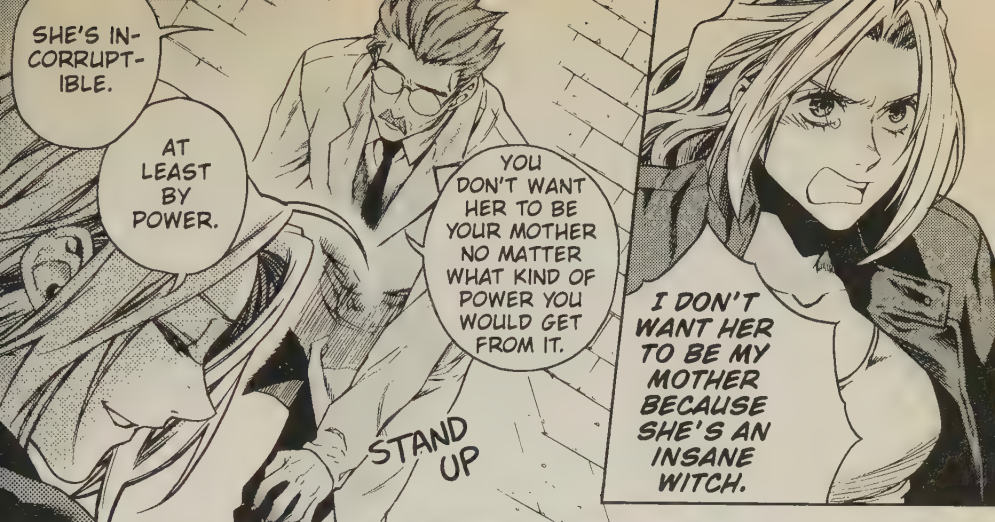
AND—

MAX...

YOU JUST
PASSED
ANOTHER
TEST.

WHAT TEST
DID SHE
PASS?





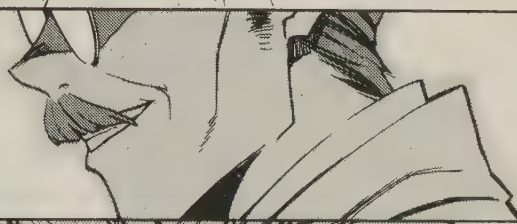
SHE'S IN-CORRUPT-IBLE.

AT LEAST BY POWER.

YOU DON'T WANT HER TO BE YOUR MOTHER NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF POWER YOU WOULD GET FROM IT.

STAND UP

I DON'T WANT HER TO BE MY MOTHER BECAUSE SHE'S AN INSANE WITCH.



SMILE

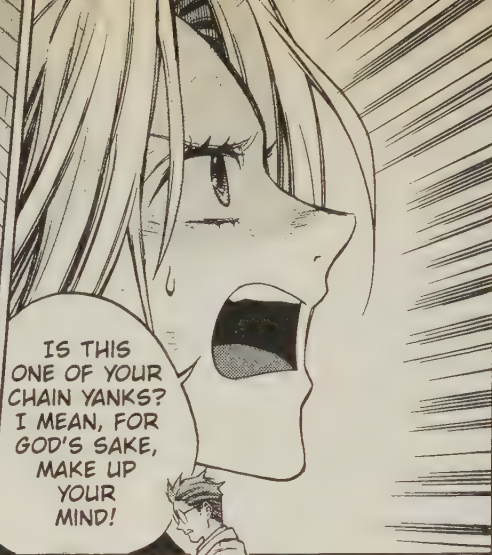


THE DIRECTOR ISN'T YOUR MOTHER.

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

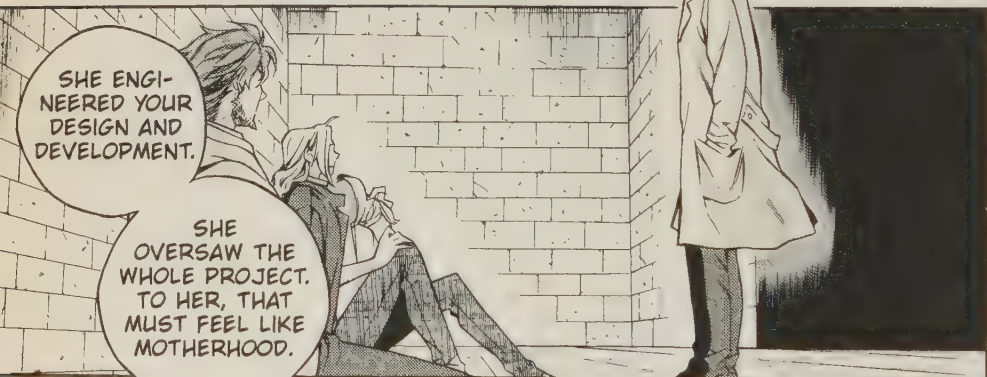


IS THIS
ONE OF YOUR
CHAIN YANKS?
I MEAN, FOR
GOD'S SAKE,
MAKE UP
YOUR
MIND!

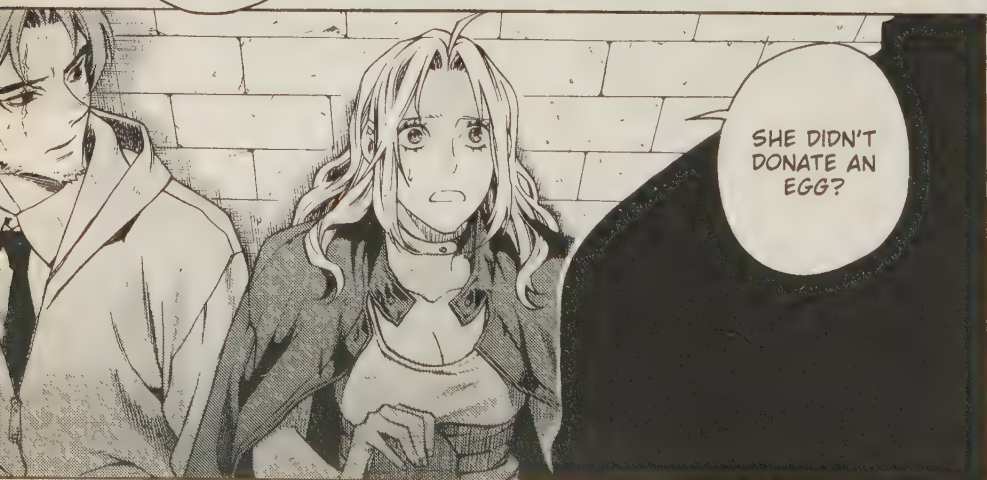


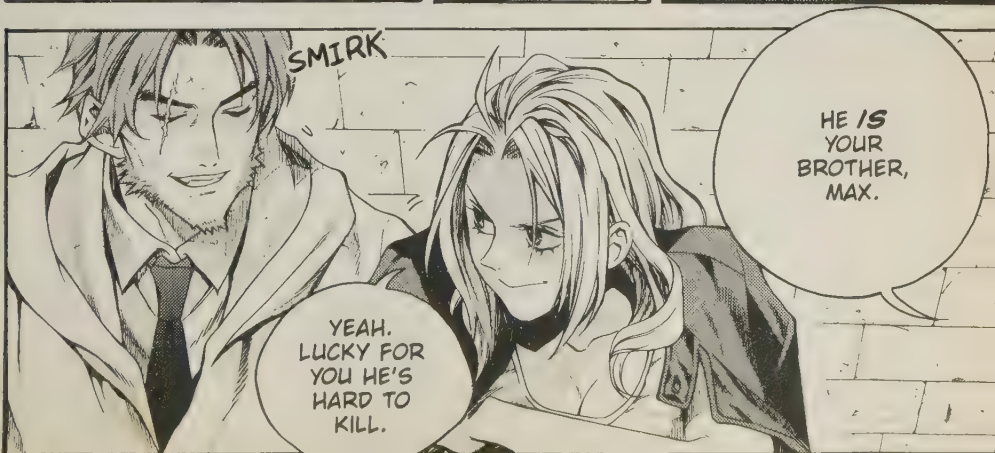
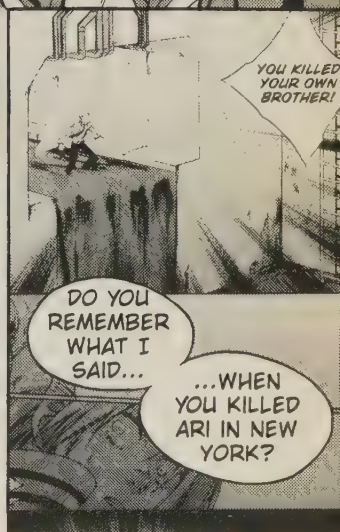
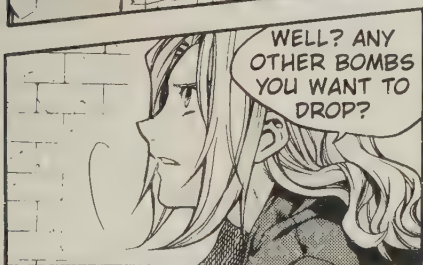
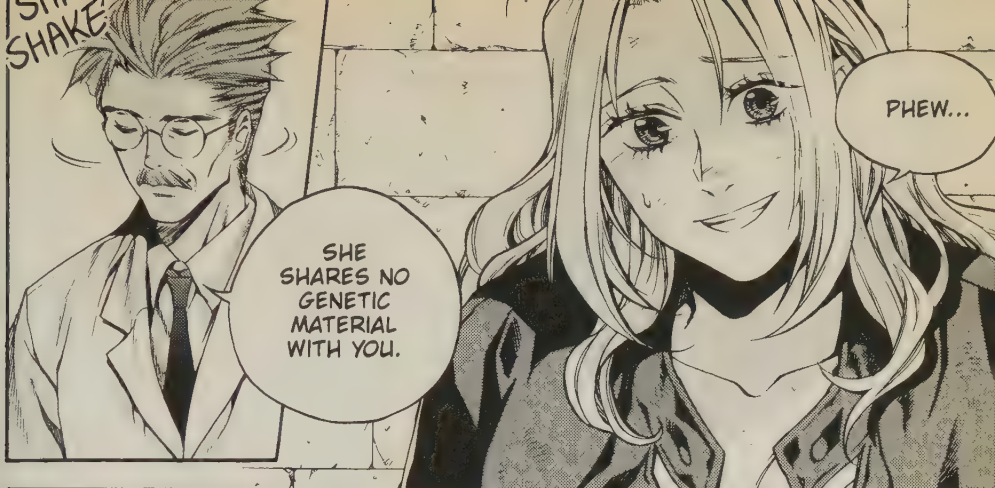
SHE ENGI-
NEERED YOUR
DESIGN AND
DEVELOPMENT.

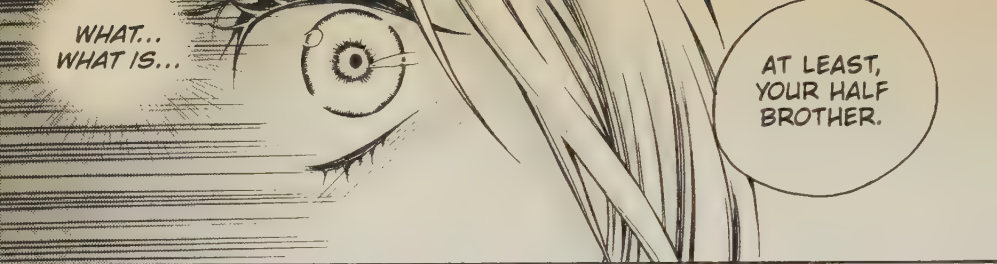
SHE
OVERSAW THE
WHOLE PROJECT.
TO HER, THAT
MUST FEEL LIKE
MOTHERHOOD.



SHE DIDN'T
DONATE AN
EGG?





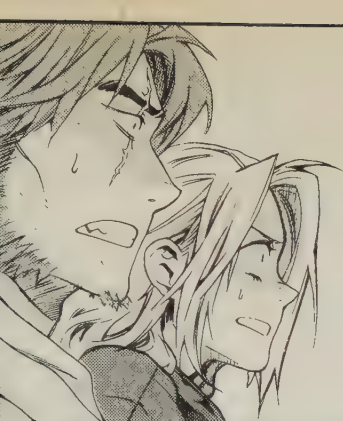


WHAT...
WHAT IS...

AT LEAST,
YOUR HALF
BROTHER.

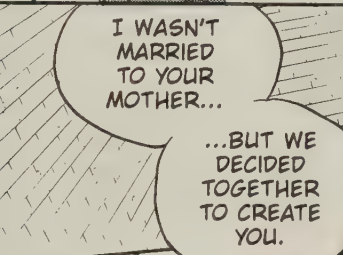


I'M YOUR
FATHER,
MAX.



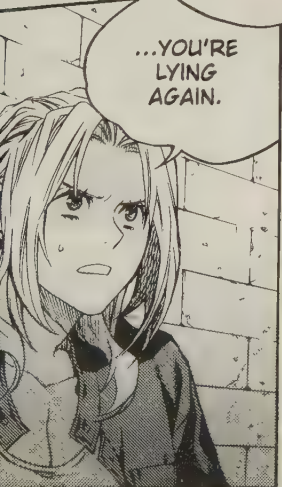
WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

I'M YOUR
FATHER.



I WASN'T
MARRIED
TO YOUR
MOTHER...

...BUT WE
DECIDED
TOGETHER
TO CREATE
YOU.

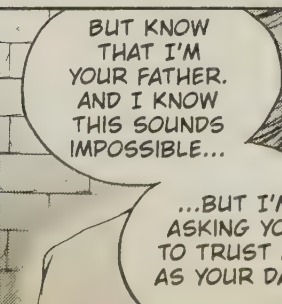


...YOU'RE
LYING
AGAIN.

I KNOW
IT'S AN AWFUL
LOT TO TAKE
IN, ESPECIALLY
GIVEN THE PAST
SIX MONTHS.

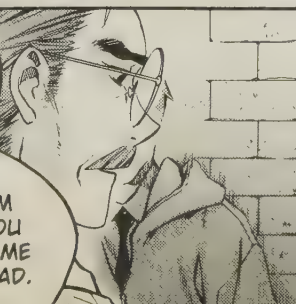
ALL I CAN
SAY IS THAT
ONE DAY I HOPE
TO BE ABLE TO
EXPLAIN IT
ALL TO YOU,
MAX.

YOU
DESERVE
THAT, AND
SO MUCH
MORE.

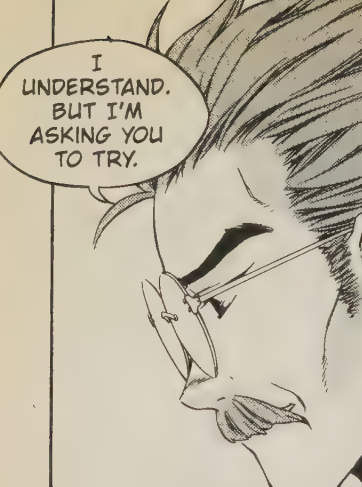


BUT KNOW
THAT I'M
YOUR FATHER.
AND I KNOW
THIS SOUNDS
IMPOSSIBLE...

...BUT I'M
ASKING YOU
TO TRUST ME
AS YOUR DAD.



THAT
REALLY CAN'T
HAPPEN AT
THIS POINT.



I UNDERSTAND.
BUT I'M
ASKING YOU
TO TRY.

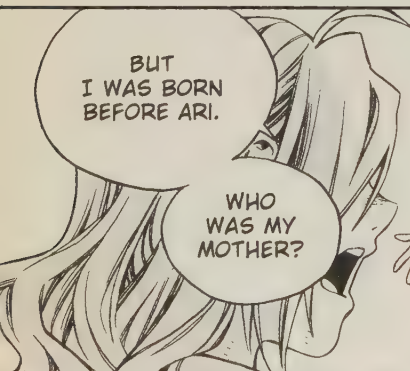


HALF
BROTHER?



YES.
YOU HAD
DIFFERENT
MOTHERS.

YOUR MOTHER
WAS MY MOTHER
WHO DIED
SHORTLY AFTER
YOU WERE
BORN.



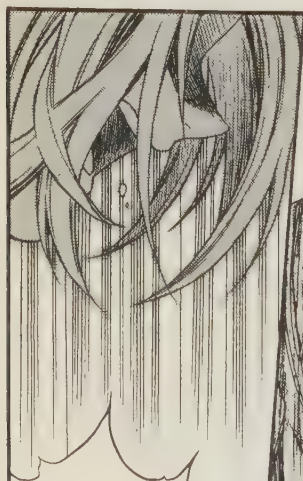
BUT
I WAS BORN
BEFORE ARI.

WHO
WAS MY
MOTHER?



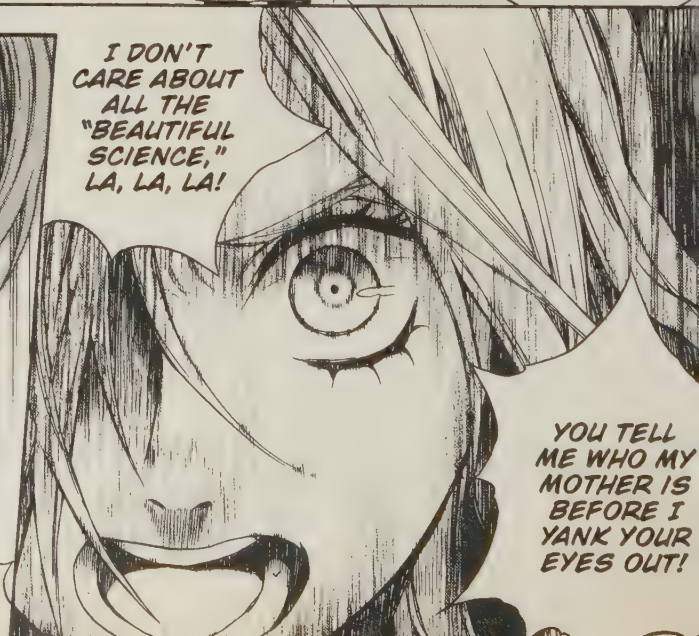
YOUR MOTHER
AND I HAD
NO PERSONAL
RELATIONSHIP.
BUT WE
AGREED...

...THAT WE
WANTED TO BE
PART OF YOUR
BEGINNING. IT WAS
A MONUMENTAL,
STUNNING IDEA,
THAT WE—



I DON'T
CARE ABOUT
ALL THE
"BEAUTIFUL
SCIENCE,"
LA, LA, LA!

I DON'T
WANT TO
HEAR THIS!



YOU TELL
ME WHO MY
MOTHER IS
BEFORE I
YANK YOUR
EYES OUT!



SHE'S
A GOOD
WOMAN...

...AND YOU
REMINDE ME
OF HER.

YOU...
BETTER...
TELL...ME.



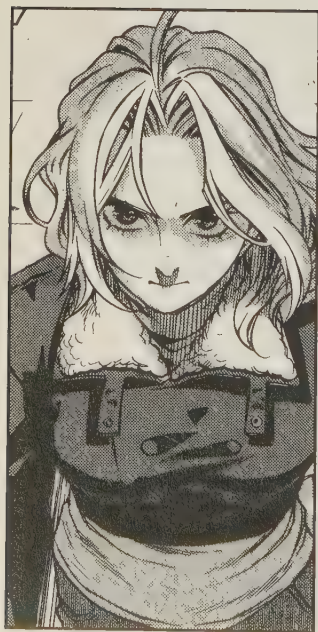
YOUR
MOTHER
IS DR.
MARTINEZ.
VALENCIA
MARTINEZ.

YOU
MET HER IN
ARIZONA.

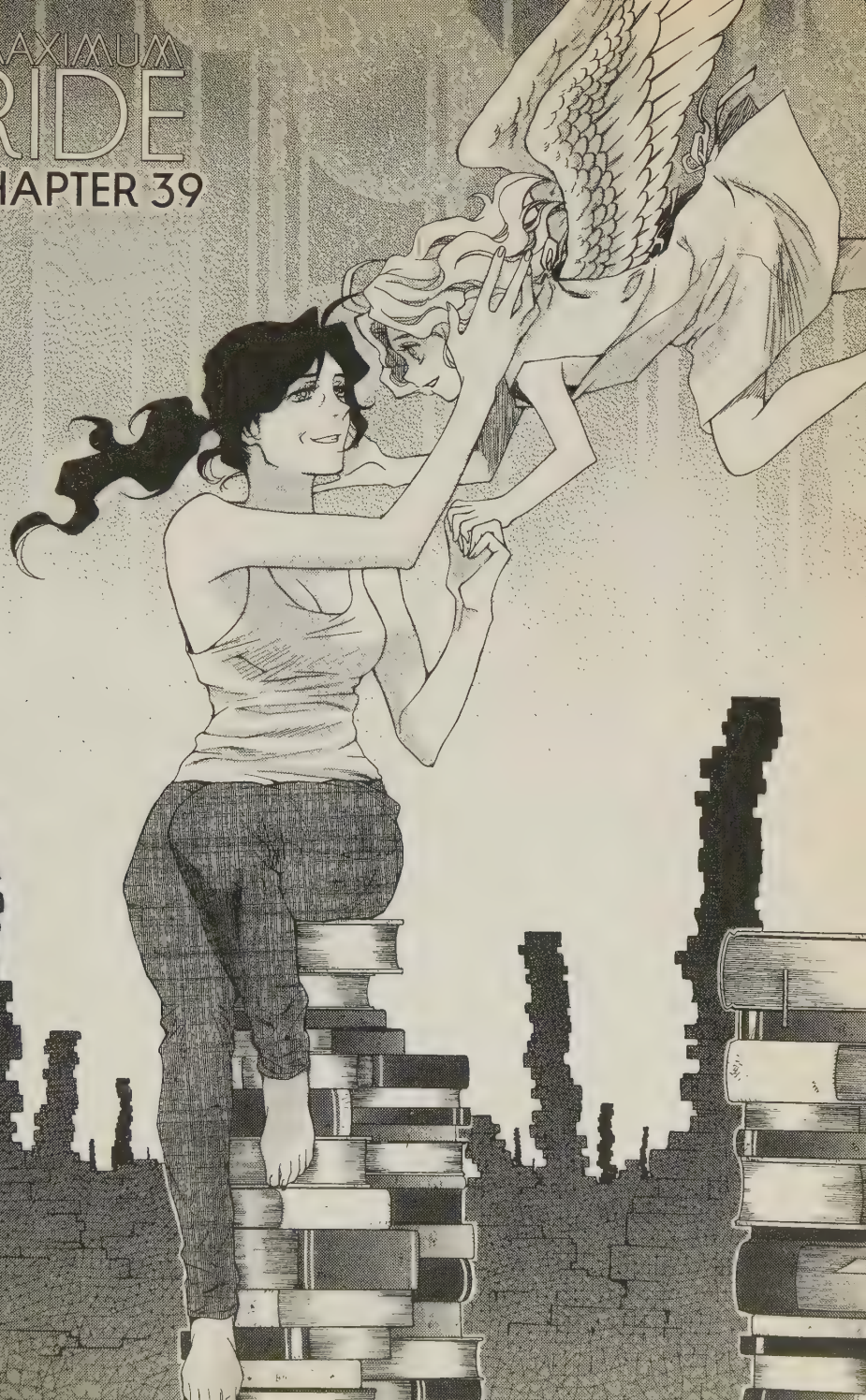


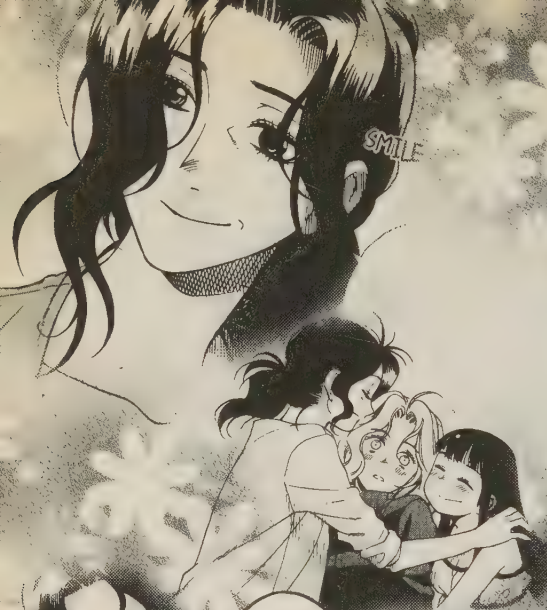
DR.
MARTINEZ...
IS MY...
MOTHER?

MAXIMUM
RIDE



MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 39



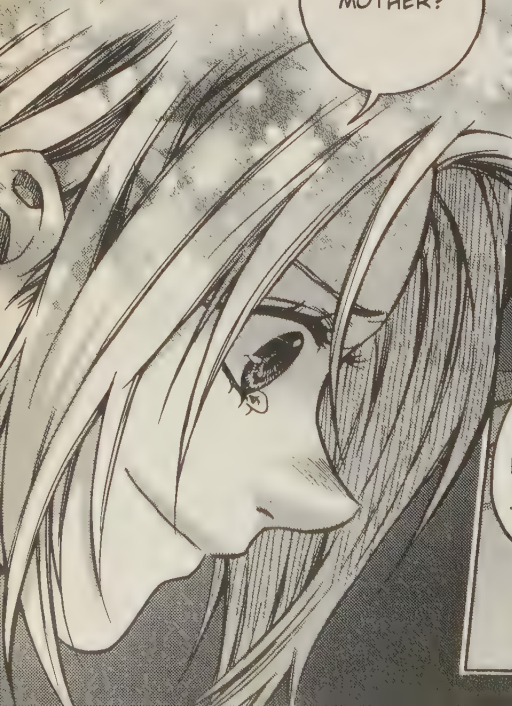


DR.
MARTINEZ
...

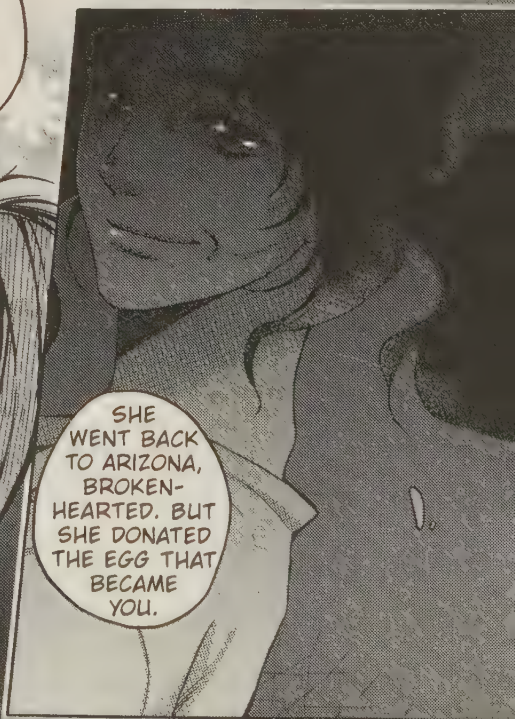
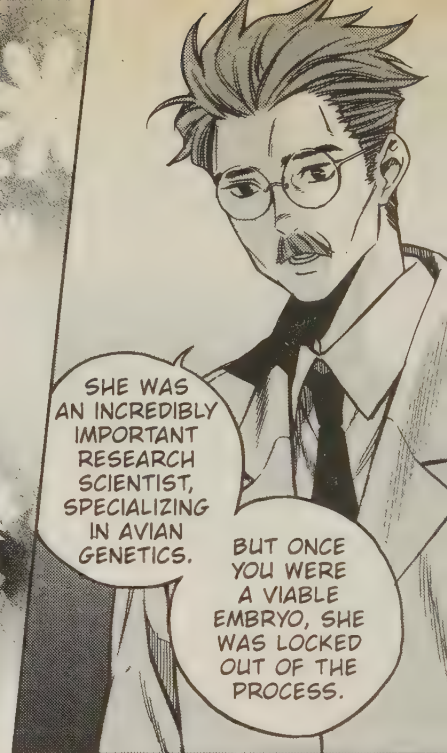
...IS MY...
MOTHER?

SHE WAS
AN INCREDIBLY
IMPORTANT
RESEARCH
SCIENTIST,
SPECIALIZING
IN AVIAN
GENETICS.

BUT ONCE
YOU WERE
A VIABLE
EMBRYO, SHE
WAS LOCKED
OUT OF THE
PROCESS.



SHE
WENT BACK
TO ARIZONA,
BROKEN-
HEARTED. BUT
SHE DONATED
THE EGG THAT
BECAME
YOU.



DR.
MARTINEZ
IS HISPANIC.

I DON'T
LOOK
ANYTHING
LIKE HER.

YOU HAVE
HER BROWN
EYES.

IF THIS
IS AN
ELABORATE
TEST,
SOMETHING
ELSE I'M
SUPPOSED
TO PASS
SOMEHOW...

...YOU
WILL
NEVER
SEE THE
LIGHT
OF DAY
AGAIN.

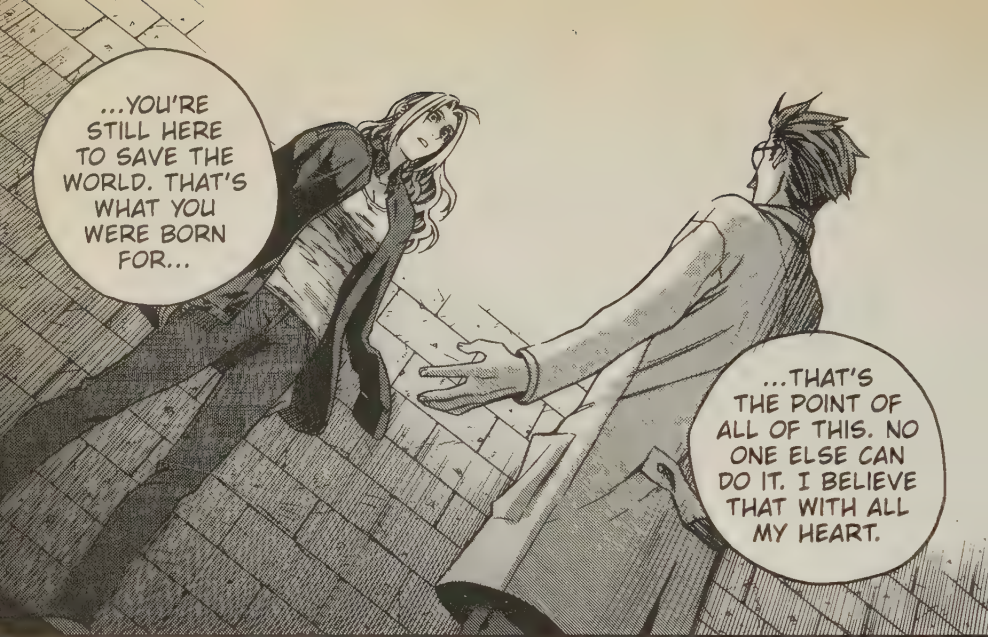
THIS IS
NOT A TEST.
OUT OF
EVERYTHING
I'VE EVER
TOLD YOU,
THIS IS THE
MOST TRUE.

VALENCIA
MARTINEZ
IS YOUR
MOTHER.
AND I'M
YOUR
FATHER.

I DON'T
HAVE A
FATHER.

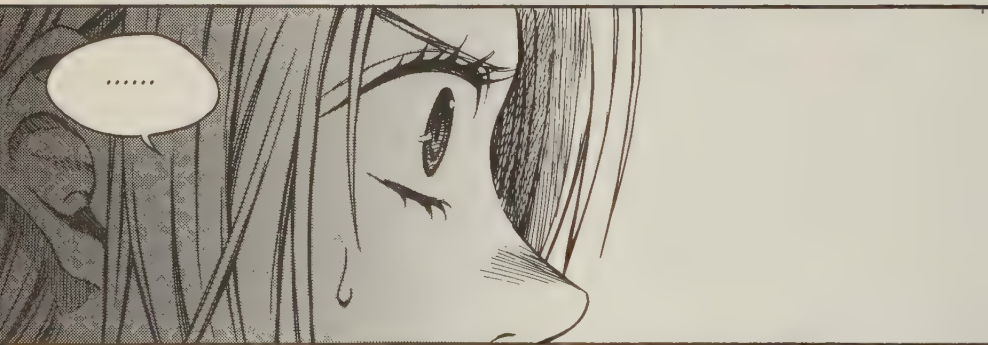
SSK

MAX...



...YOU'RE STILL HERE TO SAVE THE WORLD. THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE BORN FOR...

...THAT'S THE POINT OF ALL OF THIS. NO ONE ELSE CAN DO IT. I BELIEVE THAT WITH ALL MY HEART.

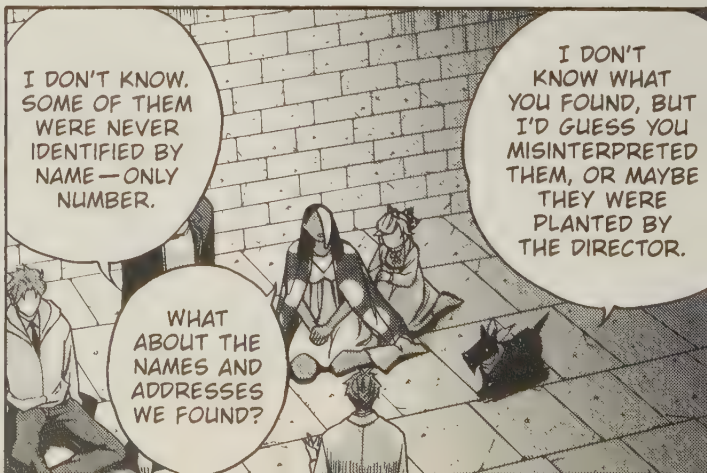


.....



WHAT ABOUT OUR PARENTS?

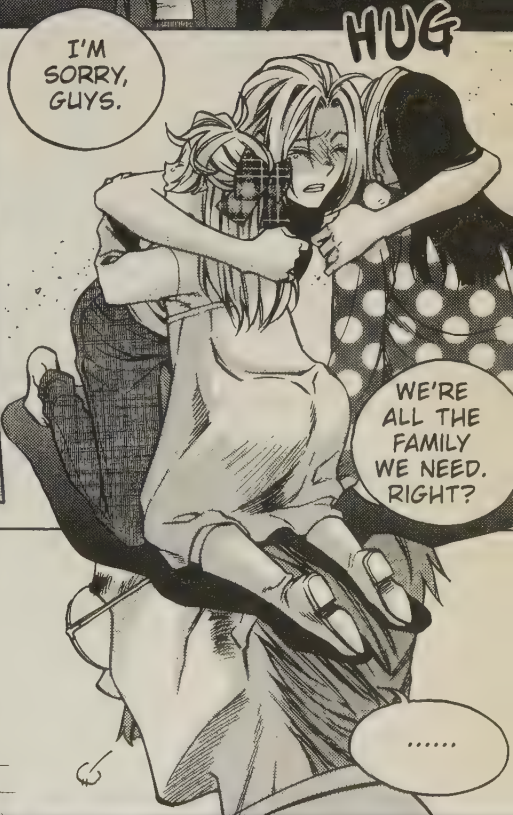
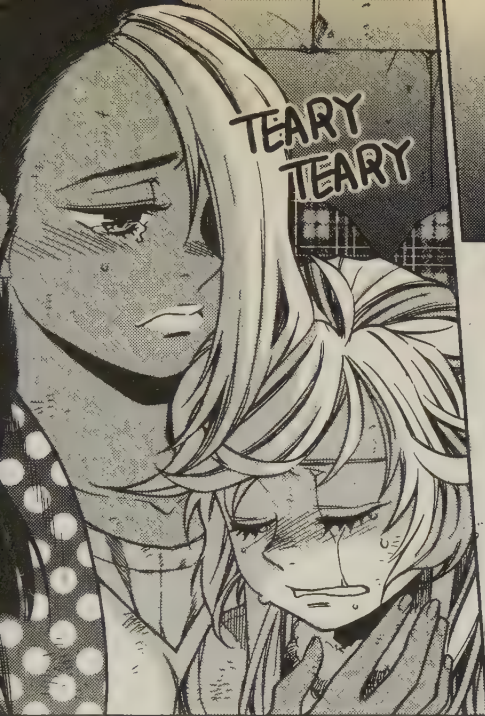
ME AND THE GASMAN. NUDGE, FANG. WHERE ARE THEY?



I DON'T KNOW. SOME OF THEM WERE NEVER IDENTIFIED BY NAME—ONLY NUMBER.

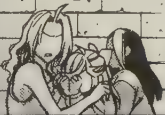
WHAT ABOUT THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES WE FOUND?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU FOUND, BUT I'D GUESS YOU MISINTERPRETED THEM, OR MAYBE THEY WERE PLANTED BY THE DIRECTOR.



YOU CAN GO
NOW. UNLESS YOU
HAVE ANY MORE
HEARTBREAKING
NEWS YOU'D LIKE
TO DELIVER.

SNIFF...
SNIFF...



YOU'RE
SUPPOSED
TO COME SEE
THE RALLY.

AND
THEN
THERE'S
A FINAL
TEST.

LET'S STICK TOGETHER, PEOPLE!

Okay, folks, we're on the East Coast somewhere between Miami and Eastport, Maine. Don't want to be more specific than that. We're on our way to rejoin Max. Don't have time to rehash all the details, but let's just say that I've decided a flock ought to stick together while they can.

We've gotten more mail than we can handle, so thanks to everyone who's supporting us. I can only reply to a few people, so I'll do that here, and then we have to split.

To Advon777 in Utah: I don't know where you got a missile launcher, and I don't want to know. But even though it might come in handy, it still seems like a really bad idea for you to be messing with it. Maybe you should just put it back where you got it.

To Felicite StarLight in Milan, Italy: Thanks for the offer, but I really don't have time for a girlfriend right now. I found your ideas . . . creative, but this is not a good time.

To JamesL in Ontario: Thanks, man. I appreciate your support. We need all the help we can get, but waiting till you get out of second grade is fine.

To PDM1223: Excellent! That's exactly what I'm talking about! Tell people what's going on, spread the message, organize protests and stuff. Picket the gargantuan pharmco companies like Itex. I hacked into their files and found that the companies Stellah Corp, Dywestra, Mofongo Research, DelaneyMinkerPrince, and a bunch of others are all Itex under different names in different countries. Stellah Corp is in England, not far from you.

See the whole list under Appendix F, for Fatheads.

Everyone, read this guy's mail! He totally has a handle on what I mean, what needs to happen.

To everyone in the Seattle area: There's a protest organized for Saturday. Check the schedule that BigBoyBlue has made (thanks, BBB!), attached as Appendix G, for the time and place. Folks in other cities, check the schedule. There's a tidal wave of stuff going on. Thanks to everyone who's making this happen!

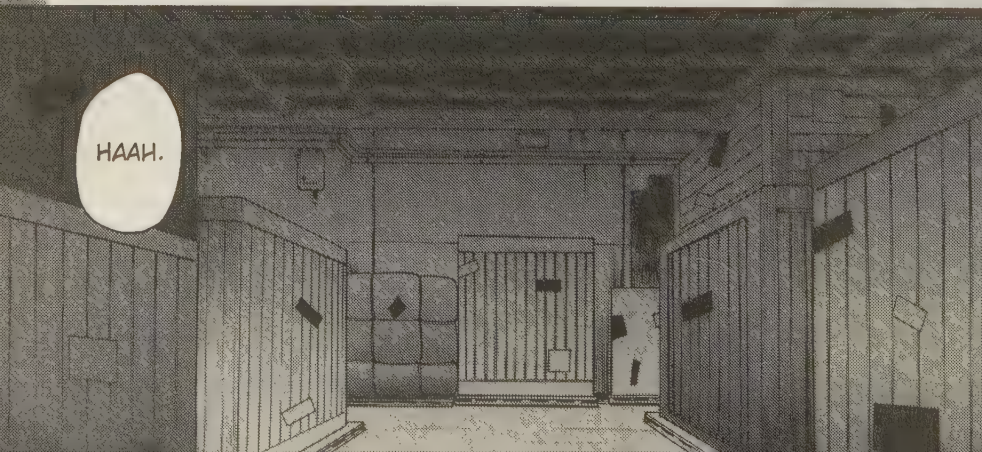
We're gonna save the world! We're the last hope!

— Fang

CLICK
4IC



HAHH.



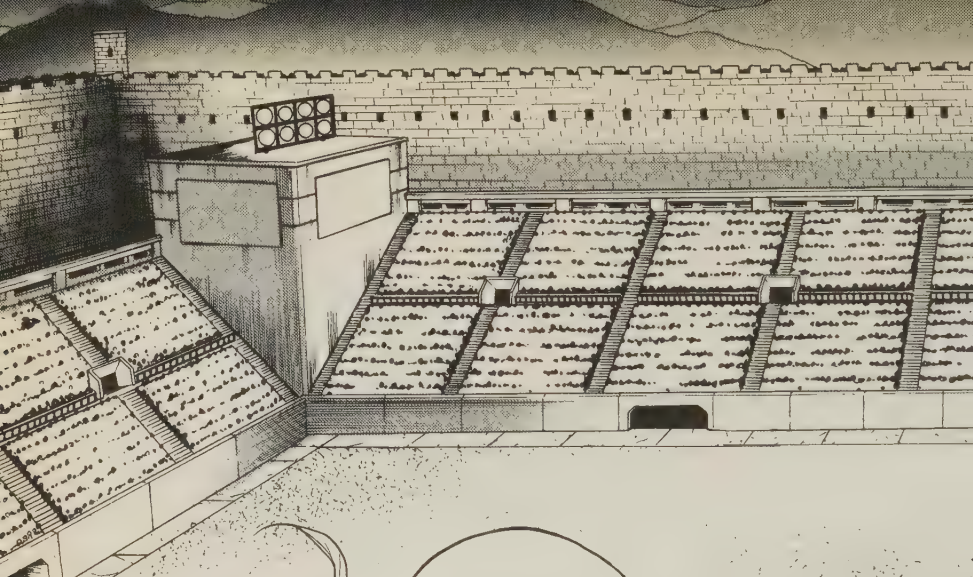
[HOME](#)[Blog Posts](#)[Discussions](#)[Groups](#)[Photos](#)[Ch](#)

WATCH OUT, GUYS, HERE WE COME

It's about five a.m. We should be sneaking on board the cargo plane soon. I've let the others sleep as much as they can — and of course now I'm so wiped I can't think straight. I'll try to grab some zzz's on the plane. Once it's up in the air, we're golden. We're probably the only people in the world who don't worry about plane crashes. If something happens to this plane and we start going down, I'll be like, later! I hope Max is okay. Any of you guys — if you're around Lendeheim, Germany, go to the castle there and raise heck, okay?

— Fang

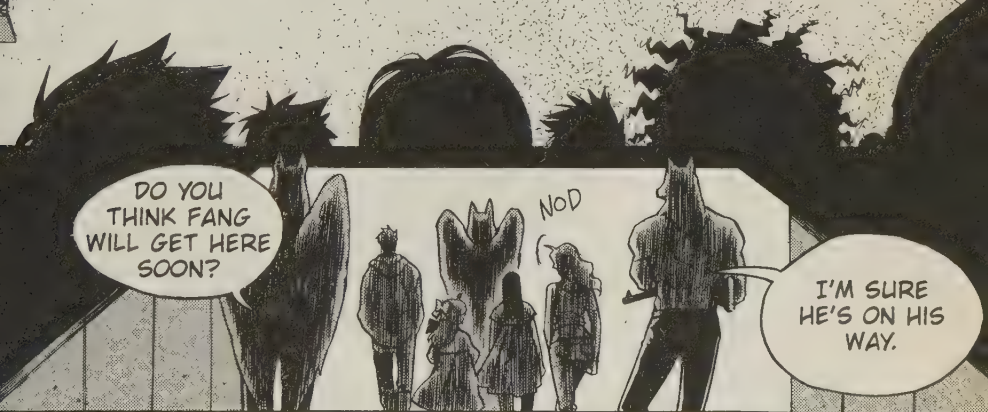
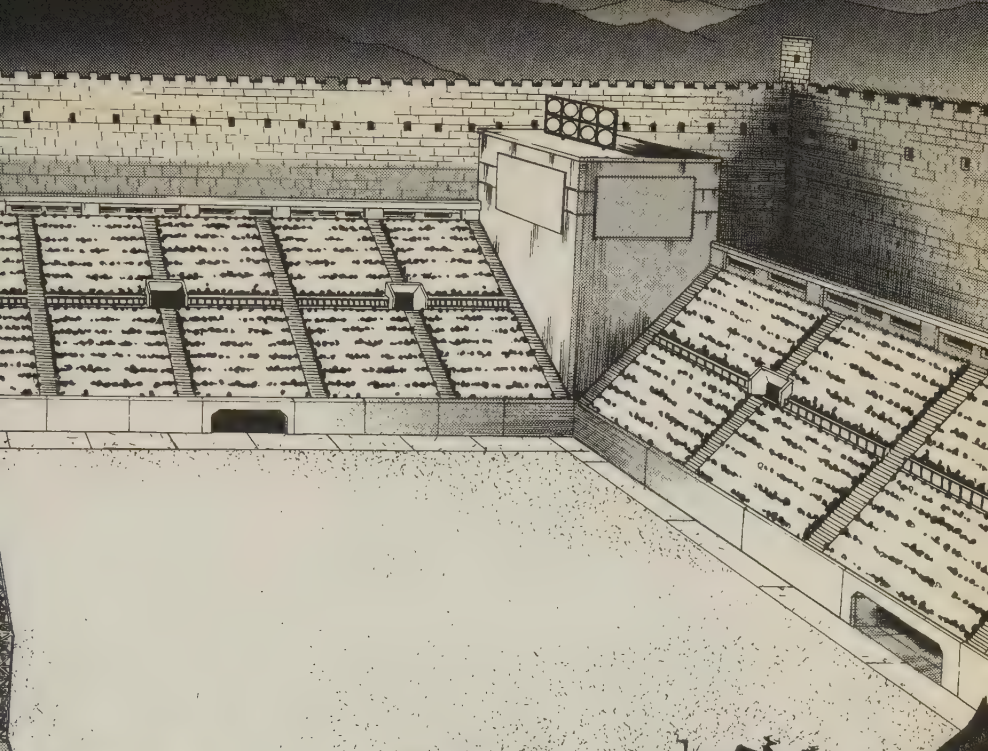
V
...
9



IS THIS A
PEP RALLY?

WITH
CHEERLEADERS?
I LOVE
CHEERLEADERS.

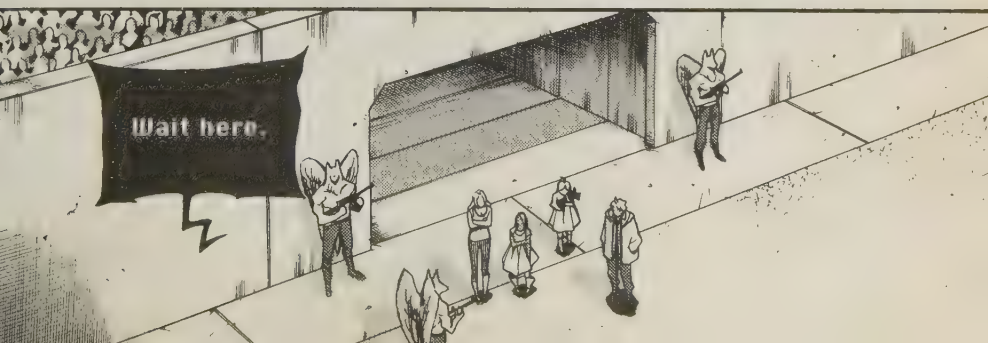
WHAT
KIND OF FINAL
TEST WOULD
IT BE?



DO YOU
THINK FANG
WILL GET HERE
SOON?

NoD

I'M SURE
HE'S ON HIS
WAY.



Wait here.

FLASH!

WELCOME,
EVERYONE.

AND NOW,
PREPARE
YOURSELVES
TO VIEW...

...MANY OF
OUR MOST
STUNNING
ACHIEVEMENTS

ZIIIIIIING...

TA-DA!



HERE YOU SEE
OUR PATENTED
PROCESS FOR
GROWING
REPLACEMENT
LIMBS.



Gross!

WE LACED
TITANIUM
CELLS INTO
THE BONE
MATERIAL...

...STRENGTH-
ENING ITS
STRESS
RESISTANCE BY
FOUR HUNDRED
PERCENT.



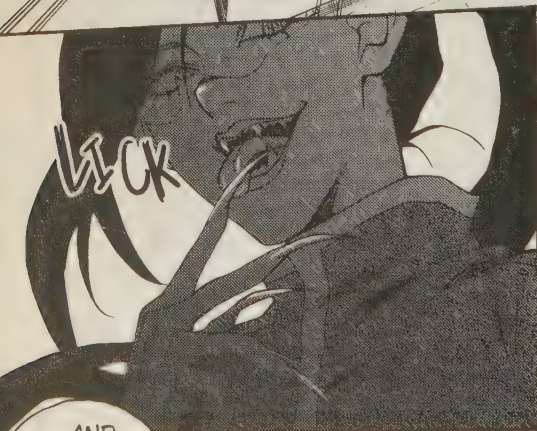
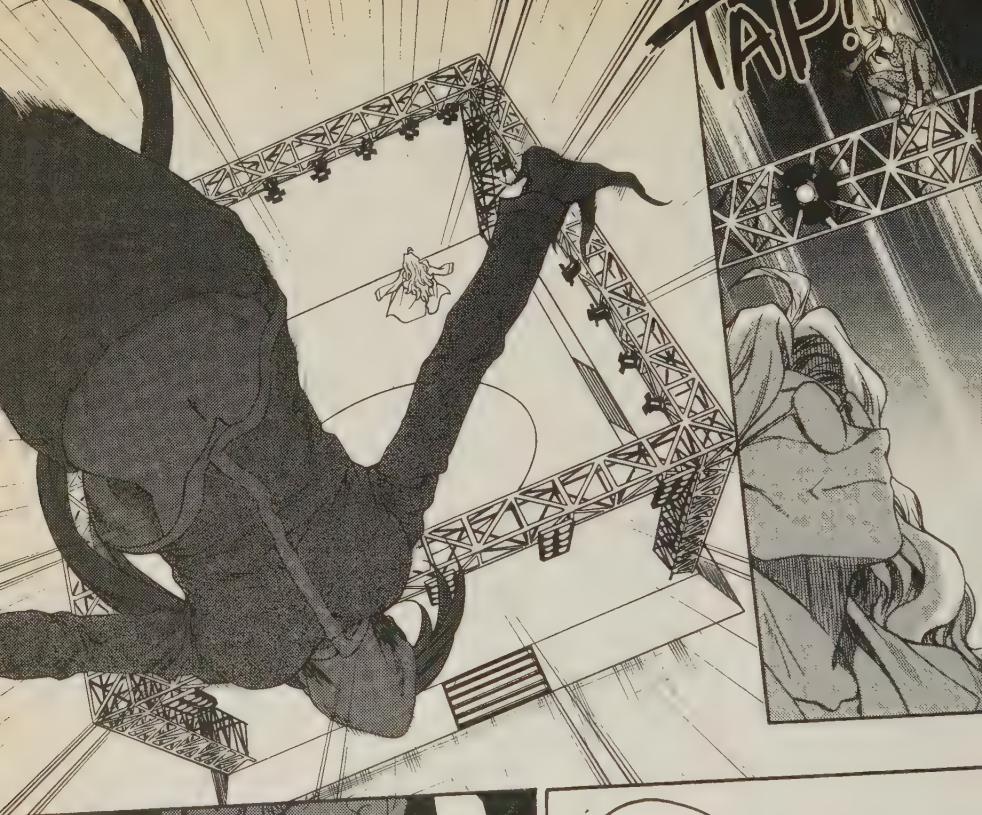
NEXT WE
HAVE ONE OF
OUR MOST
SUCCESSFUL
HUMAN
HYBRIDS.



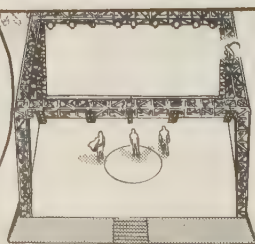
MARA
HERE HAD
PANTHERA
PARDUS
GENETIC
MATERIAL...

...GRAFTED
INTO HER
HUMAN DNA.





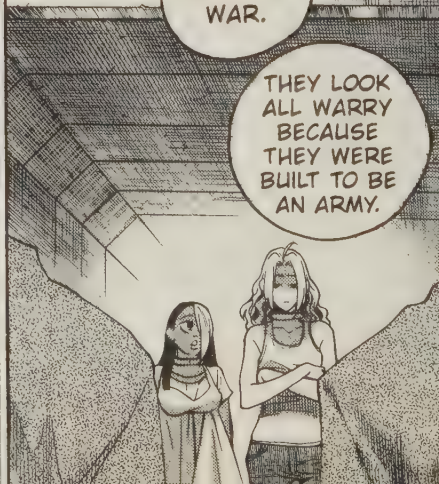
AND
THESE
TWO CAN
CONTROL
THE COLOR
OF THEIR
SKIN JUST
BY THINKING
ABOUT IT.



THESE
THINGS ALL
LOOK LIKE
SOLDIERS.

LIKE,
FOR A WAR.

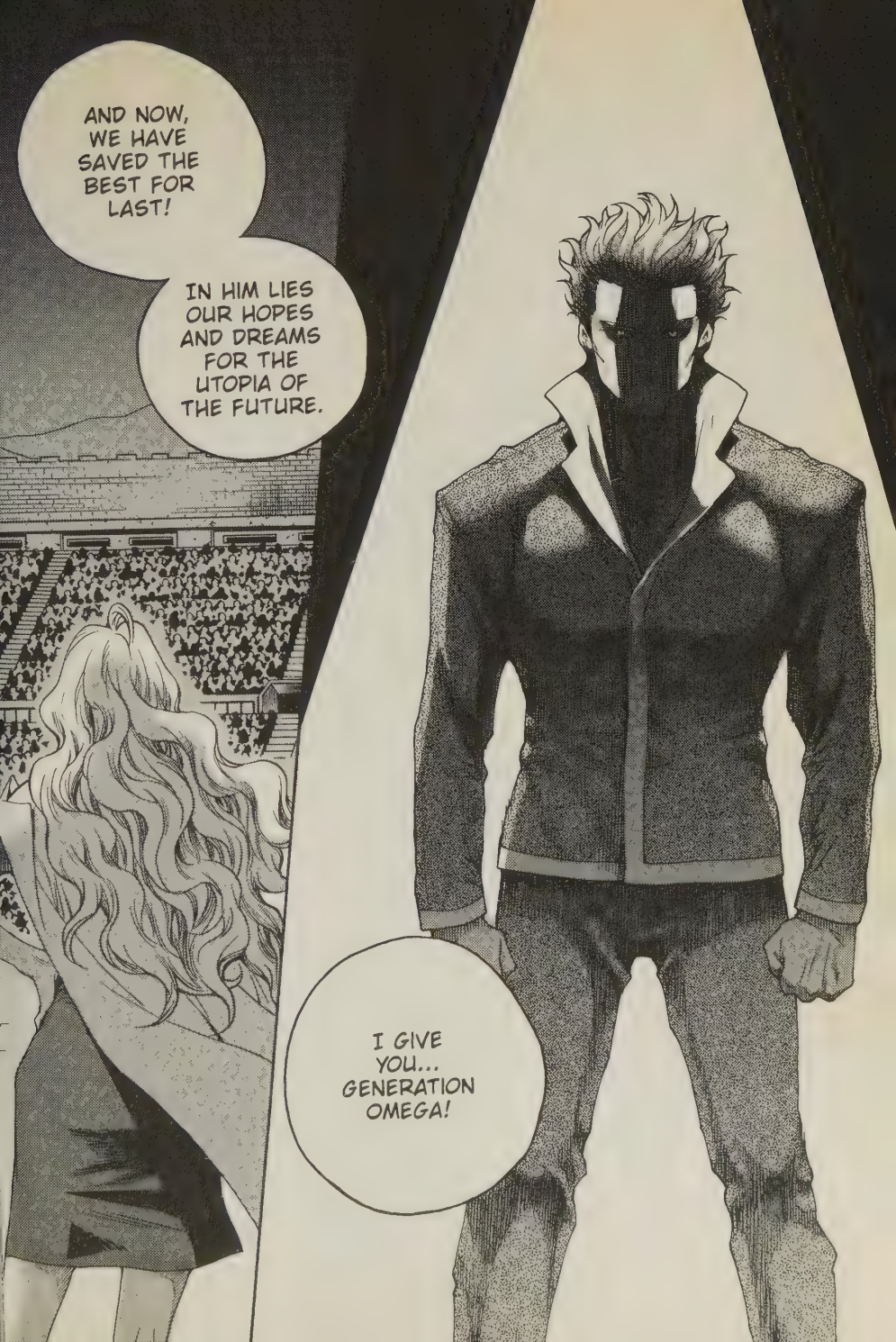
THEY LOOK
ALL WARRY
BECAUSE
THEY WERE
BUILT TO BE
AN ARMY.



AND NOW,
WE HAVE
SAVED THE
BEST FOR
LAST!

IN HIM LIES
OUR HOPES
AND DREAMS
FOR THE
UTOPIA OF
THE FUTURE.

I GIVE
YOU...
GENERATION
OMEGA!



COLD

THE RESULT OF MORE THAN SIX DECADES OF RESEARCH, HE IS AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS AND FAR SURPASSES ANY HYBRID MADE BEFORE.

HE'S IMMUNE TO VIRTUALLY EVERY DISEASE KNOWN AND HAS SUPERACUTE REFLEXES AND GREATLY INCREASED STRENGTH.

IN ADDITION, HE HAS SUPERIOR MEMORY RETENTION AND REACTION TIME.

HE TESTS OFF THE CHARTS OF EVERY INTELLIGENCE SCALE DEVISED.

HE'S TRULY A SUPER-MAN!

PLUS, HE COOKS LIKE A DREAM AND MAKES DARLING FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS IN HIS SPARE TIME.

PFFT!

TO BEGIN, OMEGA WILL VANQUISH AN OBSOLETE BUT SOMEWHAT SUCCESSFUL HUMAN-AVIAN HYBRID.

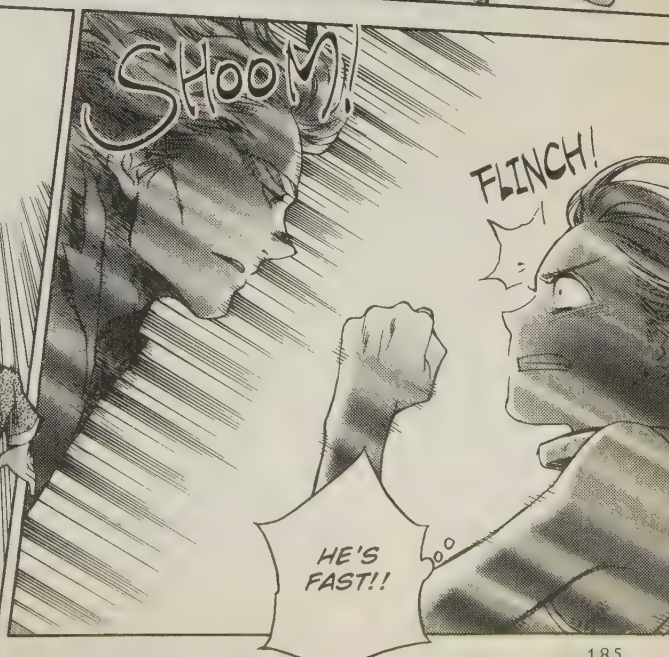
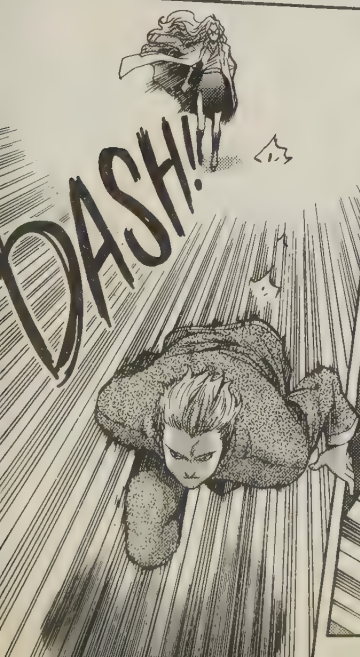
WHA—?!

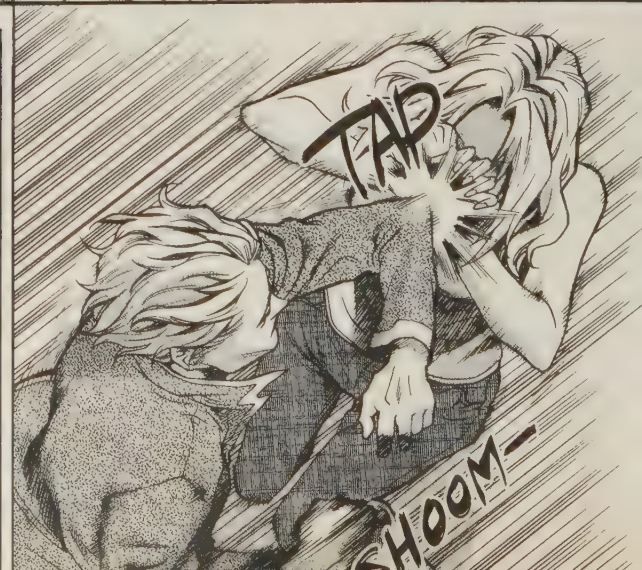
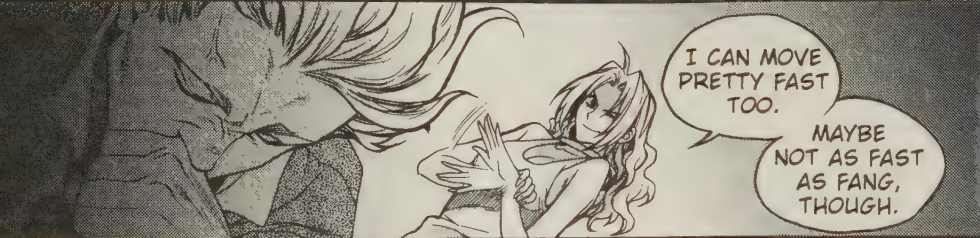
RIGHT,
MAX?

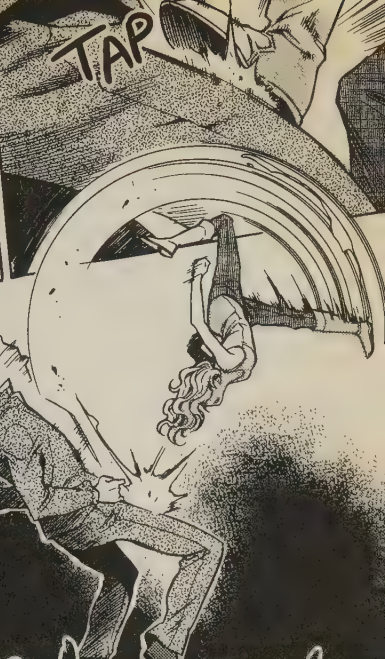
THAT GUY
WANTS TO
KILL YOU,
MAX.

HIS WHOLE
LIFE, HE'S
BEEN TRAINED
TO KILL YOU.

OF COURSE.







WAIT!

BZZZZZZ

?!!

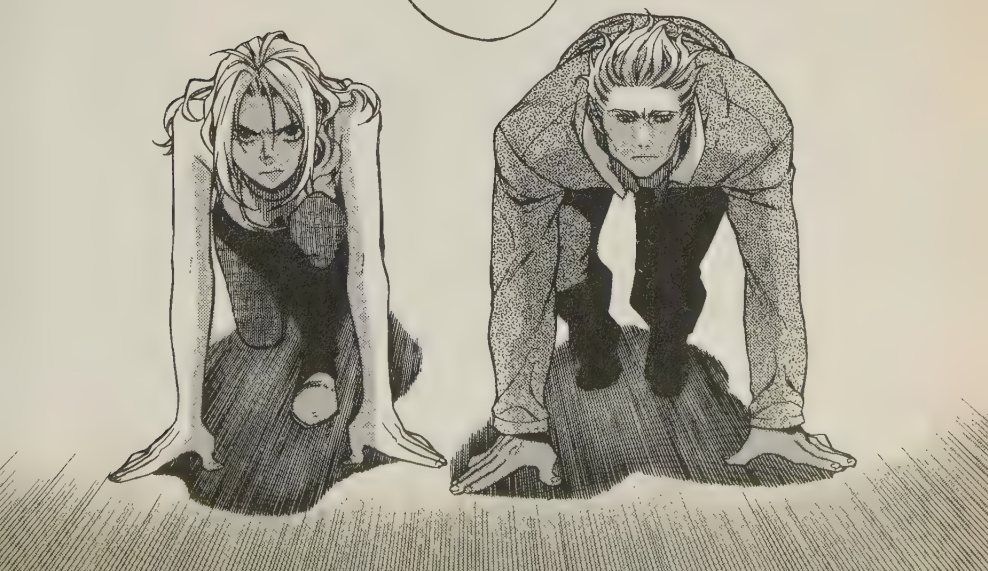
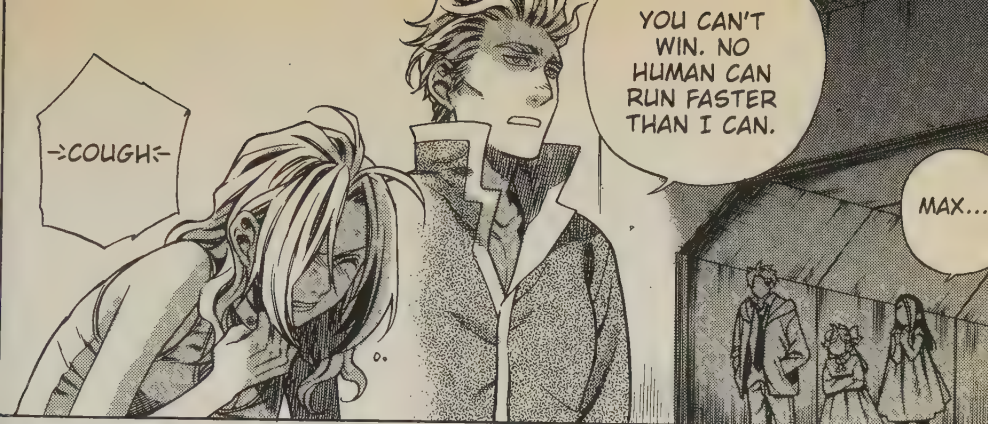
-COUGH-

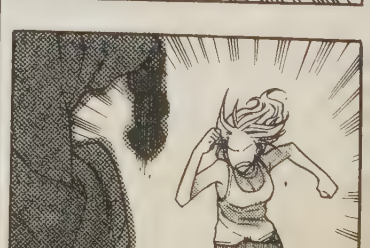
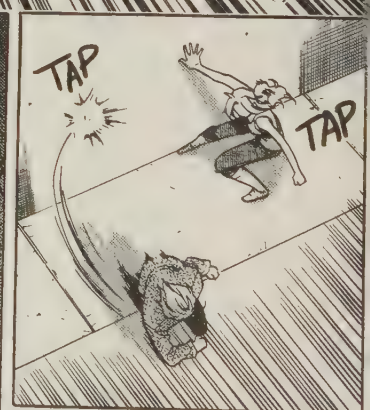
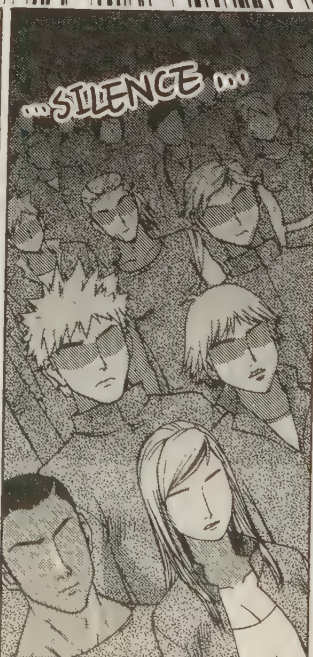
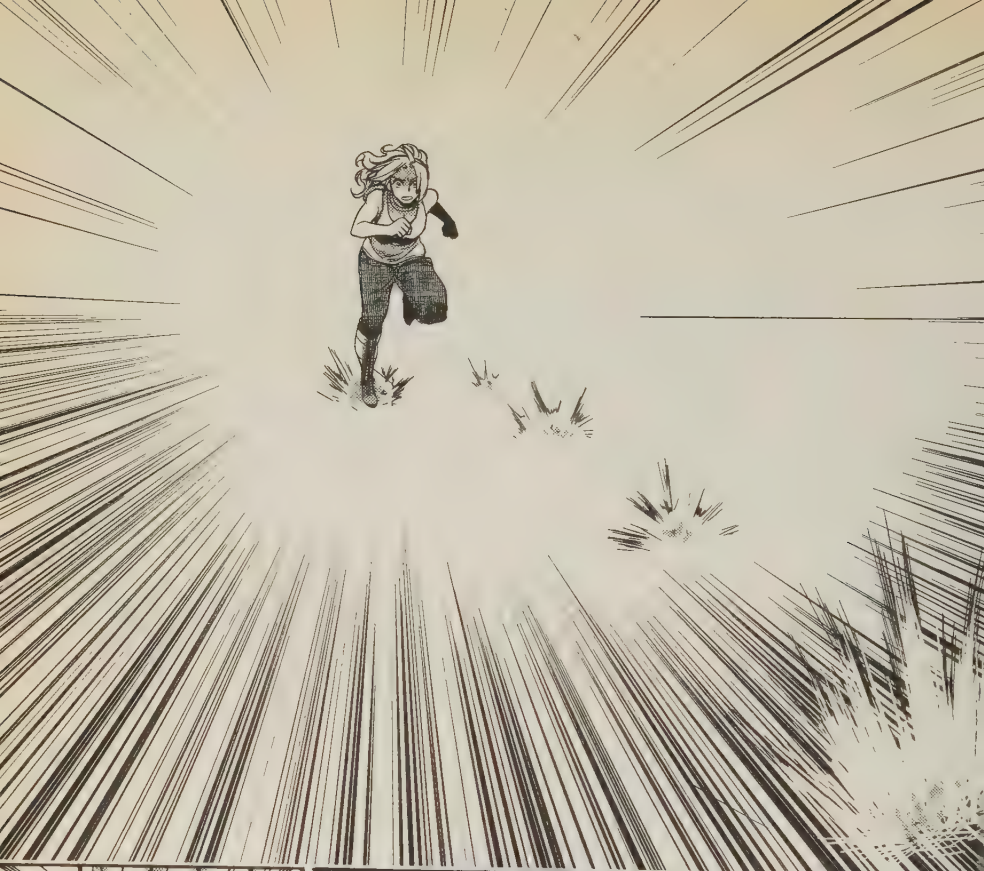
-COUGH-

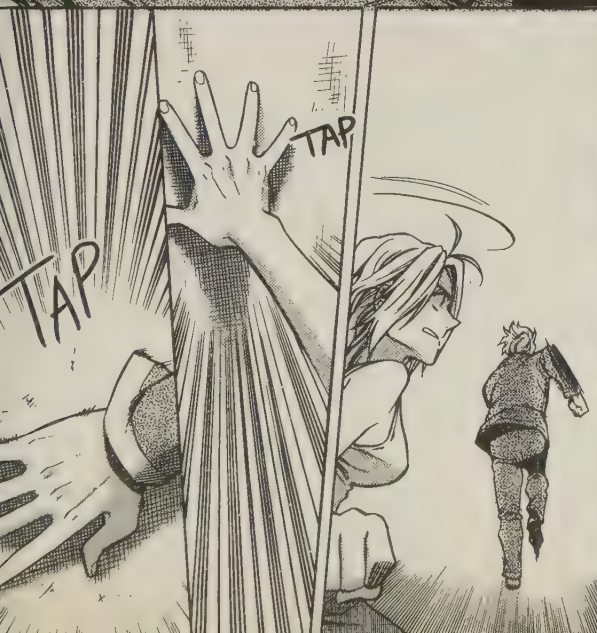
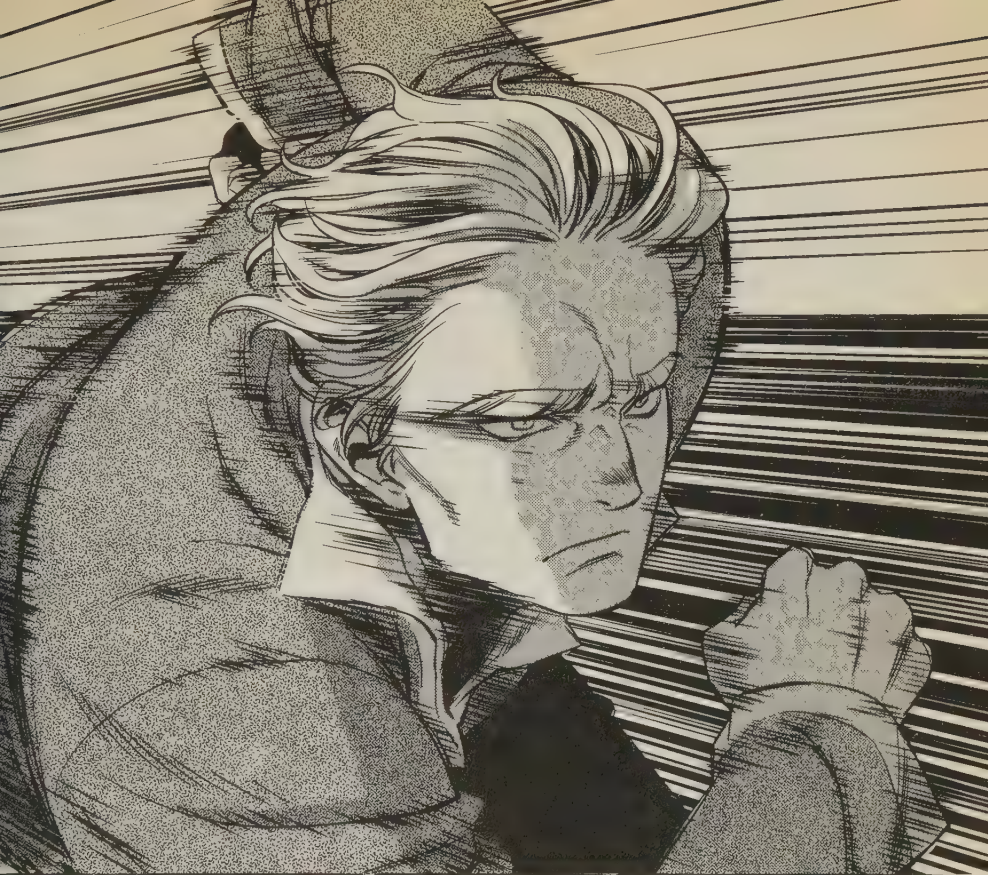
YOU HAVE
ANTICIPATED
MY
COMMANDS.

THE
FIRST
PART
OF
THE
BATTLE
WILL BE A
TEST OF
SPEED.

RUN TO
THE OPPOSITE
CASTLE WALL
AND BACK,
FOUR TIMES.
MAY THE
BETTER
MAN WIN.



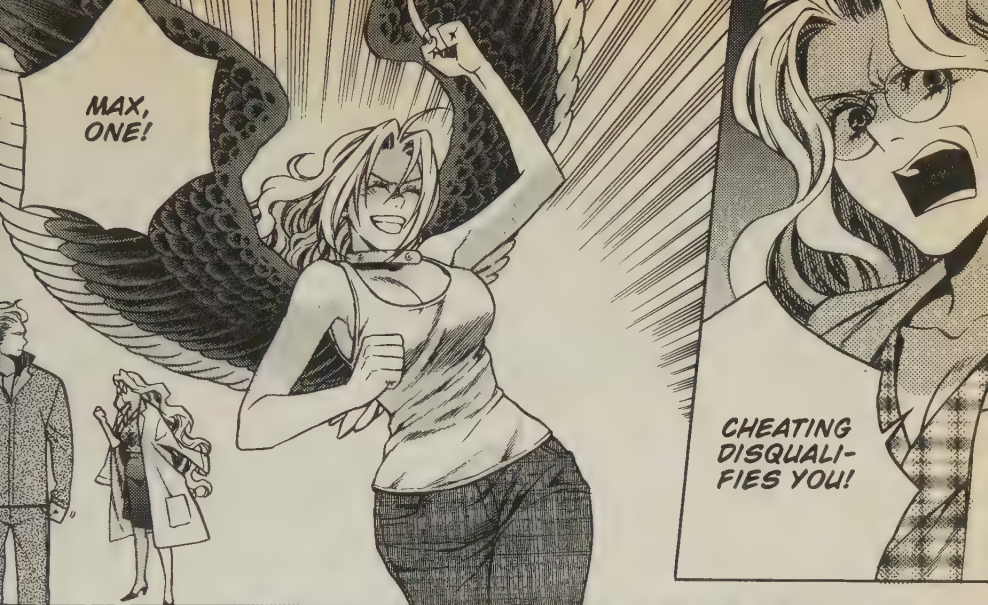






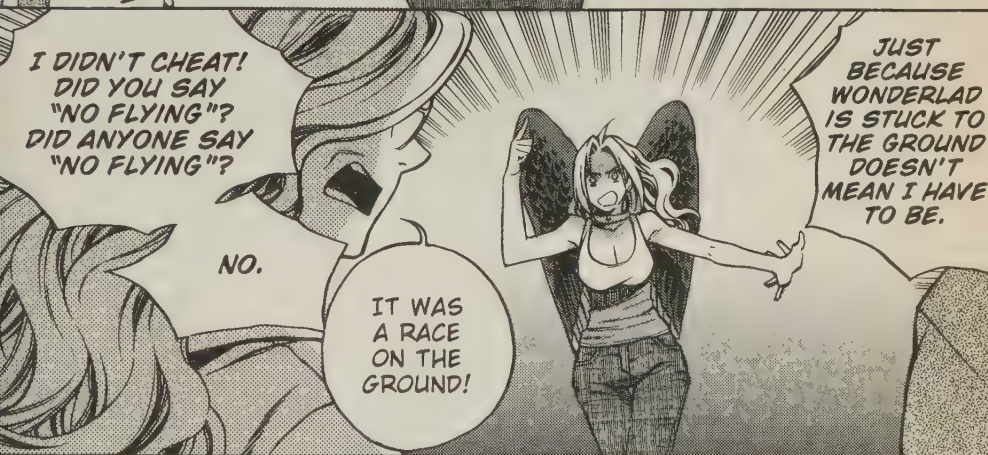
FWOOOSH

TWEE



MAX,
ONE!

CHEATING
DISQUALI-
FIES YOU!

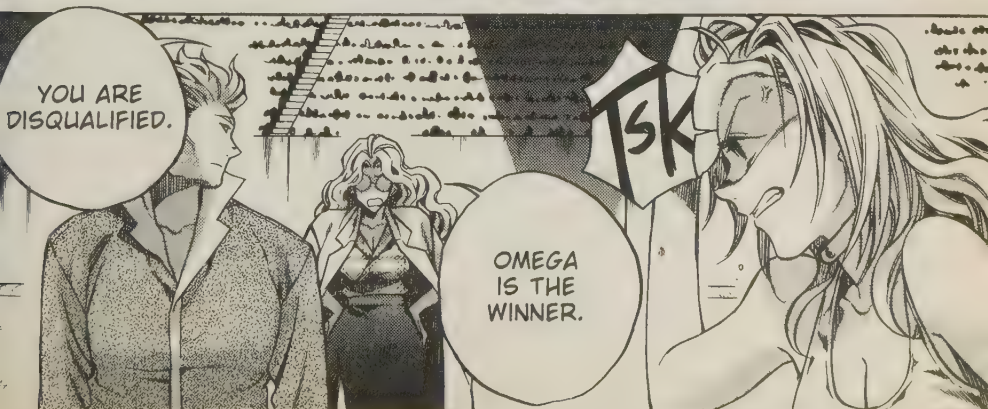


I DIDN'T CHEAT!
DID YOU SAY
"NO FLYING"?
DID ANYONE SAY
"NO FLYING"?

NO.

IT WAS
A RACE
ON THE
GROUND!

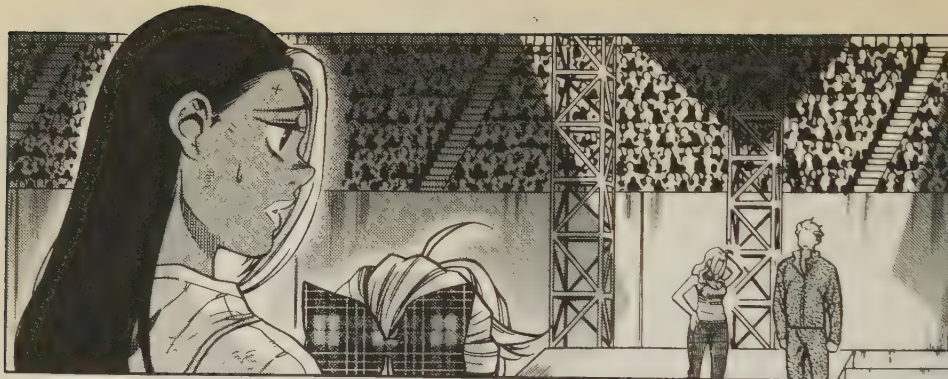
JUST
BECAUSE
WONDERLAD
IS STUCK TO
THE GROUND
DOESN'T
MEAN I HAVE
TO BE.



YOU ARE
DISQUALIFIED.

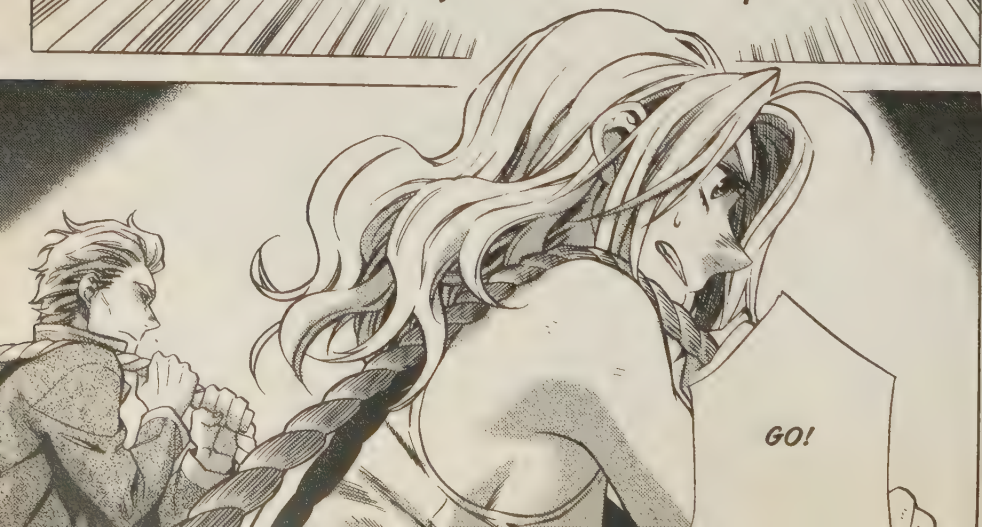
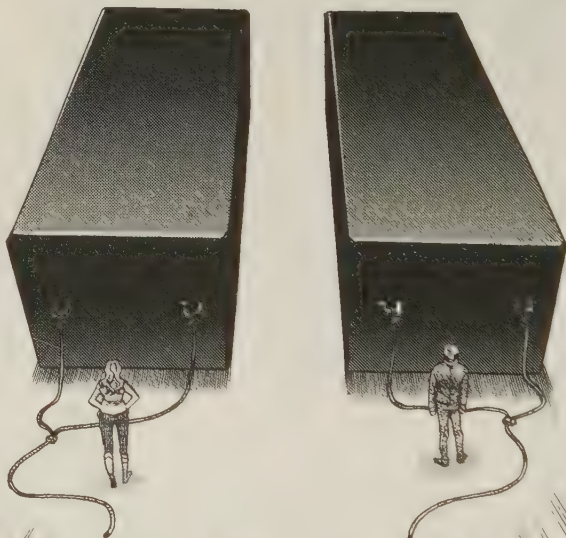
OMEGA
IS THE
WINNER.

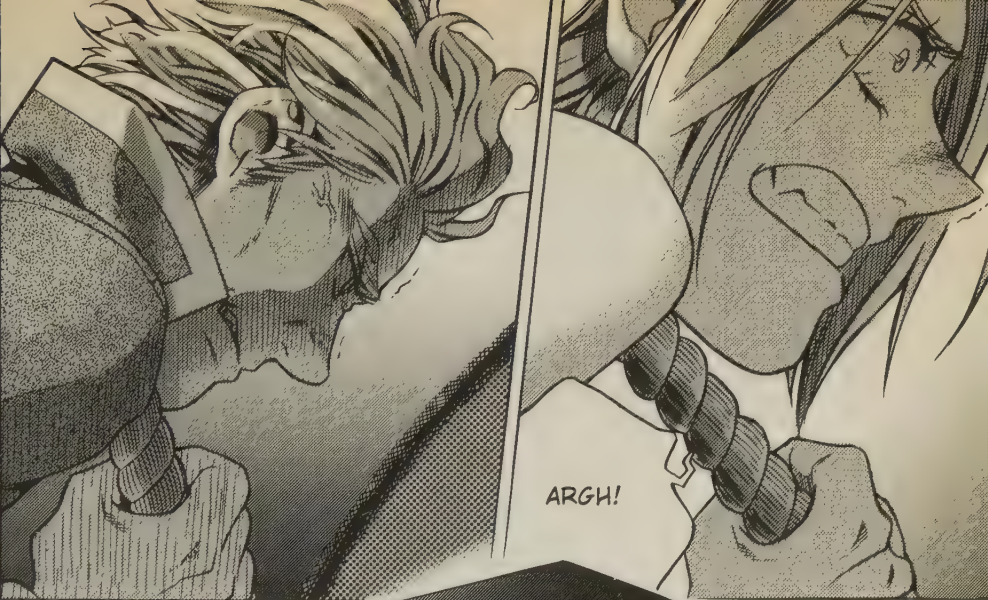
TSK



NEXT WILL BE
A CONTEST OF
STRENGTH.

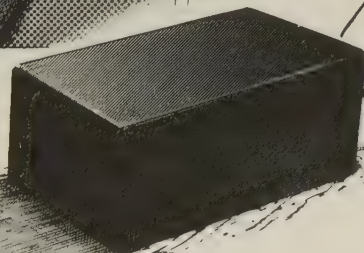
OMEGA'S
MUSCLES ARE
APPROXIMATELY
FOUR HUNDRED
PERCENT STRON-
GER AND DENSER
THAN A REGULAR
BOY'S.



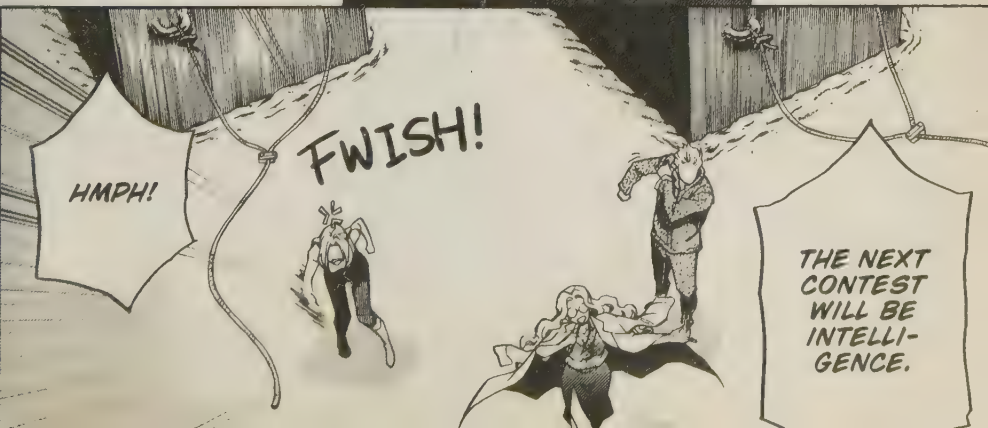
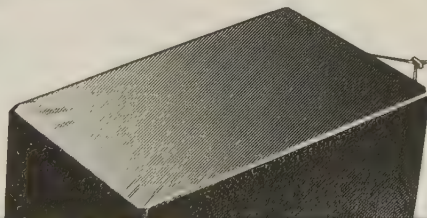


ARGH!

OMEGA
IS THE
WINNER
AGAIN!



FWEE—



HMPH!

FWISH!

THE NEXT
CONTEST
WILL BE
INTELLI-
GENCE.

FIRST
QUESTION.

THE CASTLE
WALLS ARE 18
FEET HIGH, 7
FEET THICK, AND
1,027 FEET LONG.
ONE CUBIC YARD
OF STONE AND
MORTAR WEIGHS
1,120 POUNDS, OR
EXACTLY HALF
A TON.

HOW MANY
TONS OF
STONE AND
MORTAR ARE
CONTAINED
WITHIN THE
WALLS?

WHY WOULD
I EVER
NEED TO
KNOW
THAT?

MUMBLE
MUMBLE
MUMBLE

IT'S A
SIMPLE
CALCULATION.

YEAH?
LET'S SEE
YOU DO IT.

MUMBLE
MUMBLE

ARE YOU
CONCEDING?

MUMBLE
MUMBLE

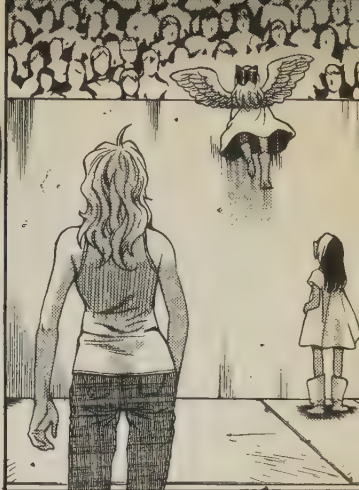
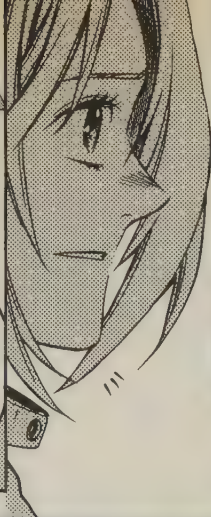
I'M NOT
CONCEDING
ANYTHING!
I'M JUST
SAYING IT'S
COMPLETELY
POINTLESS.

TWO
THOUSAND,
THREE
HUNDRED
NINETY-SIX
POINT THREE
THREE TONS.

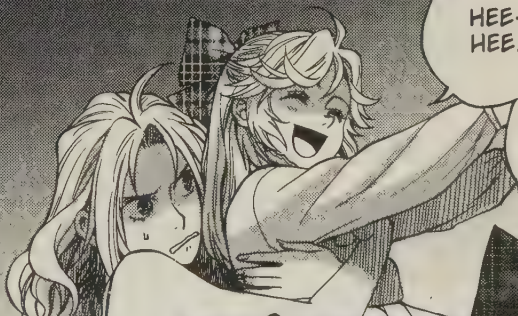
THE
QUESTION
ITSELF IS
DUMB.



IT HAS
NOTHING
TO DO WITH
BEING
ABLE TO
SURVIVE.



WHAT'S
GOING ON,
SWEETIE?



HEE-
HEE!

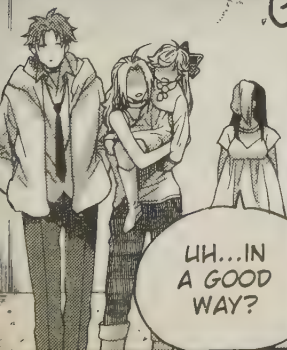
THINGS
ARE GOING
TO GET
EXCITING.

DEFINE
"EXCITING."

EVERYONE
FREAKING
OUT?

IN AN
EXCITING
WAY.

GRIN



UH...IN
A GOOD
WAY?



THEY
DON'T WANT
TO BE HERE
ANYMORE!

WE DON'T
WANT TO
BE HERE
ANYMORE!!

ROOOOAR!!

THEY'RE
TIRED OF
BEING
TREATED LIKE
NUMBERS AND
EXPERIMENTS.

AH.

WE'RE
NOT
NUMBERS!

THEY'RE
PEOPLE
TOO...

...EVEN IF
THEY WERE
JUST
CLONED
AND
CREATED

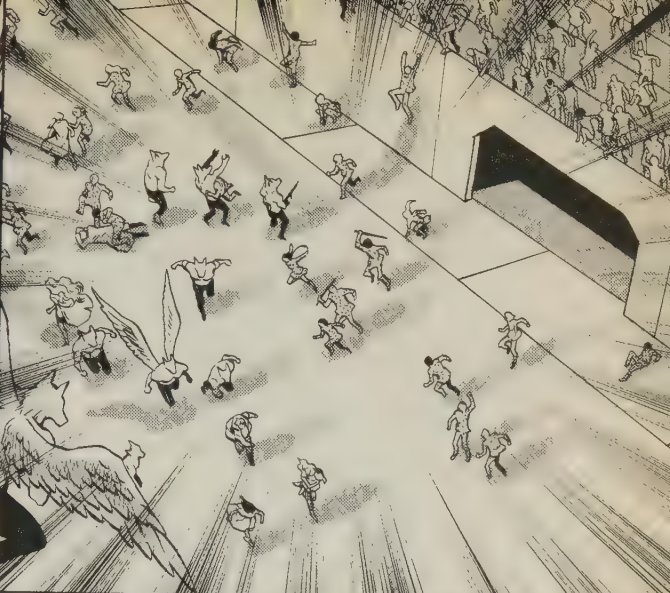
ROOOOAR!!

WE'RE
PEOPLE
TOO!

DASH!!

ROBOTS!
GET THIS
CROWD UNDER
CONTROL!

WE'RE
NOT
EXPERI-
MENTS!





MAX,
WATCH
OUT!



FWOOSH



I CAN'T
LET
ANGEL
GO...



DASH!



SWISH!



SMASH



MAX...

PHEW

...ARE
YOU...

...
OKA...



ARI?!

ARI!!!



PLEASE,
ARI?

ARI!!

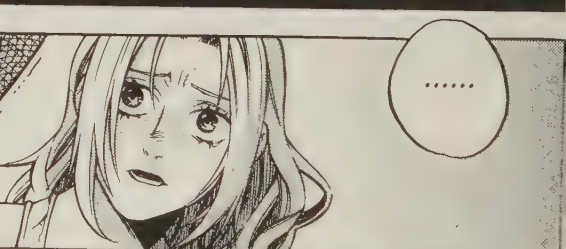
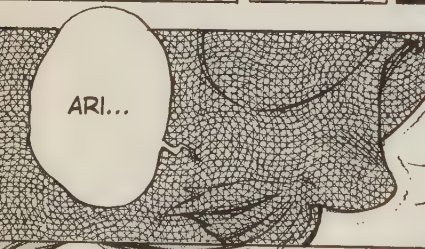
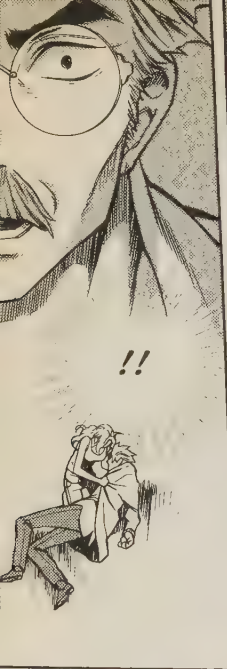
THUD...

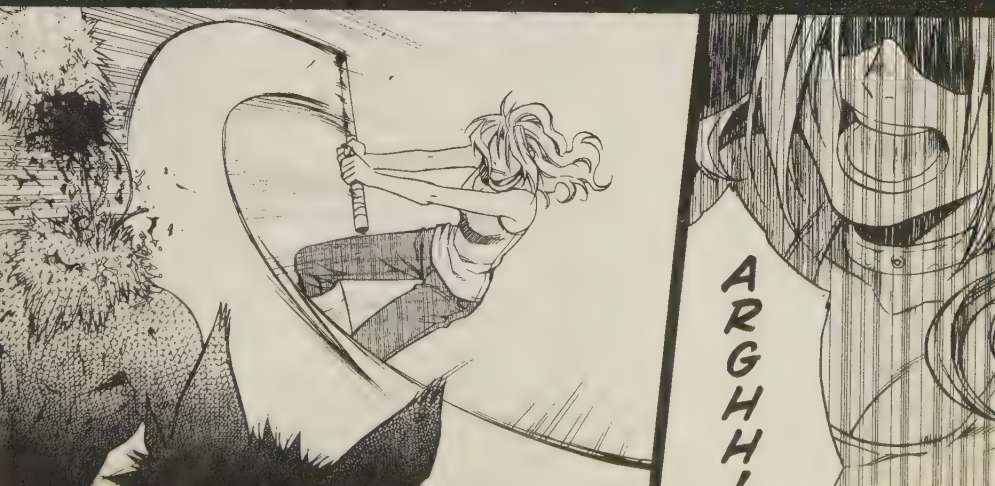
ARI!
COME
ON, SNAP
OUT OF
IT!

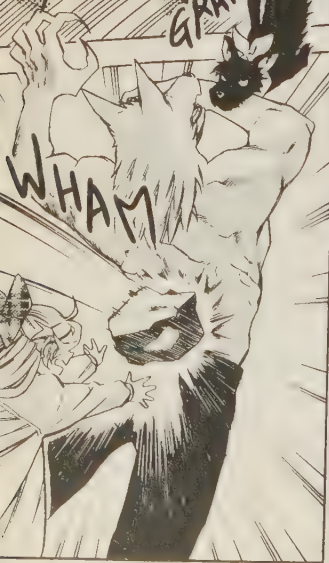
ARI,
NO!!

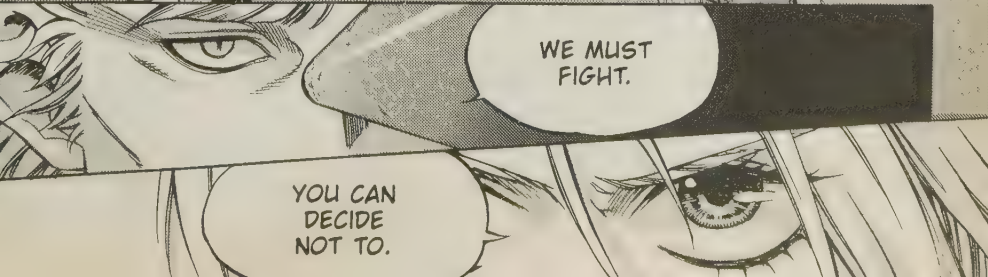
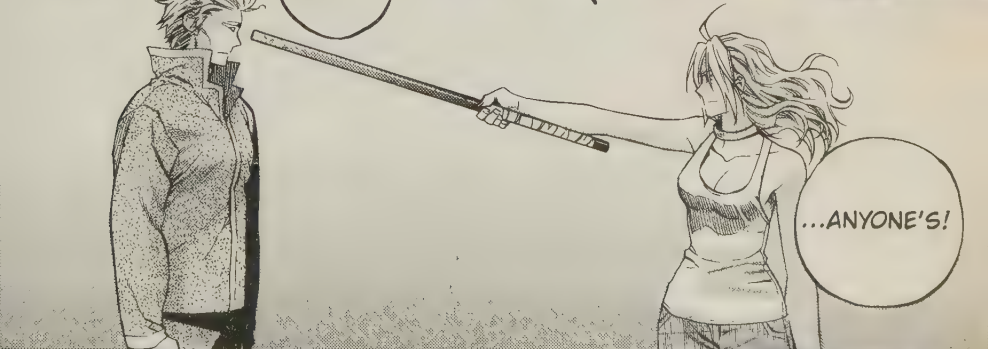
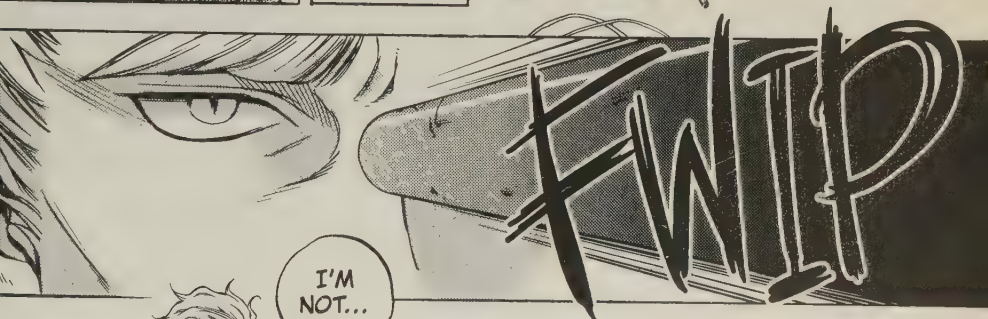
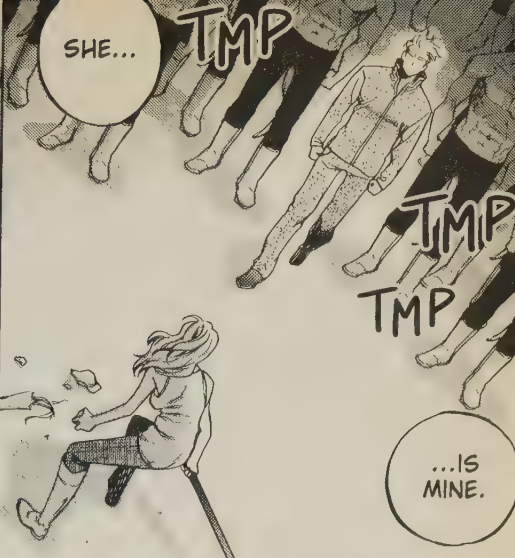
ARI...

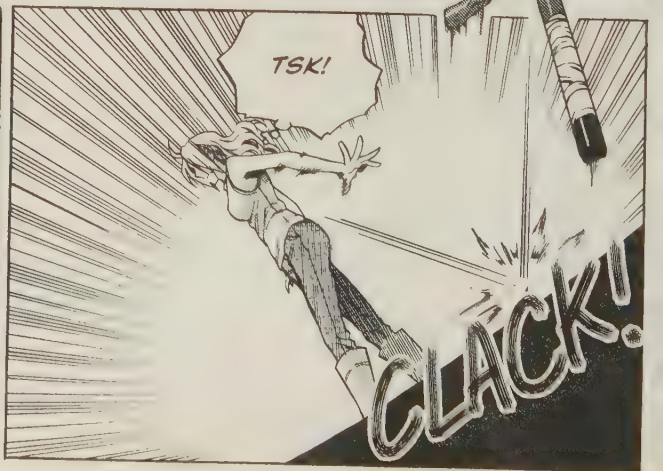
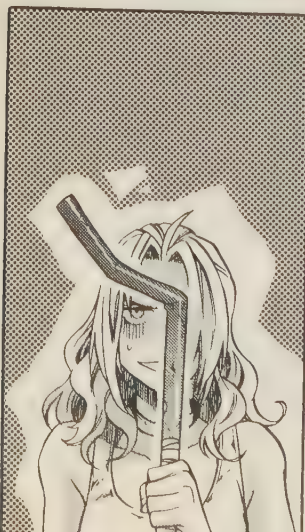
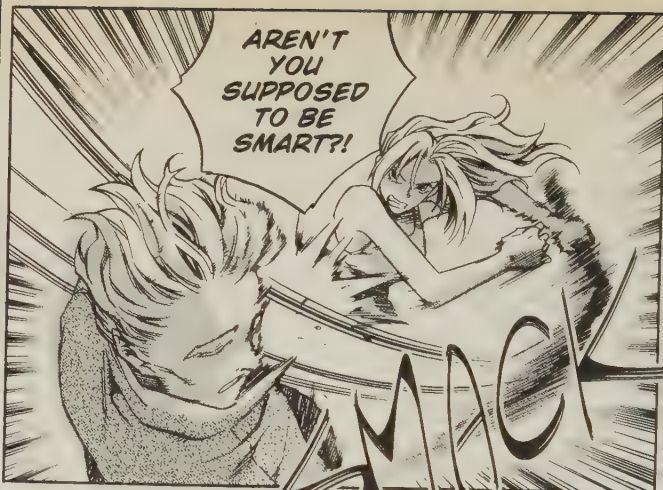
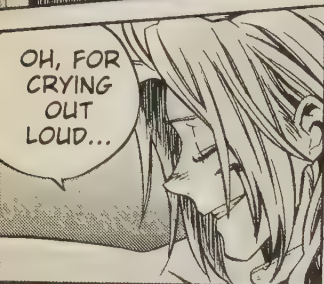
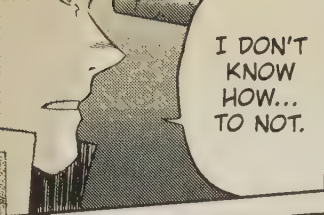
00001 7 004 053 66











TRACK THINGS
FAST WITH
HIS EYES.

WHAT
DOES
THAT
MEAN?

DAZED...

A-HA!





THUD

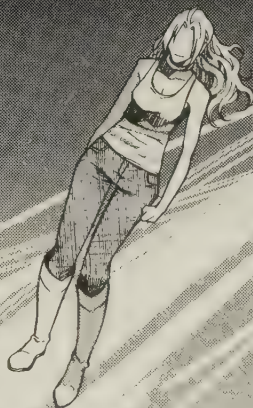


NO. HE'S
OUT COLD
BUT NOT
DEAD.



I'M NOT
LIKE YOU.

WHO'S
THE
BETTER
MAN
NOW...



...FAKE
MOTHER
OF MINE?

To be continued in **MAXIMUM RIDE**, Vol. 7!

MAXIMUM RIDE: THE MANGA

BASED ON THE NOVELS BY
JAMES PATTERSON

ART AND ADAPTATION



NARAE LEE

BACKGROUND ASSISTANCE



WT. KIM

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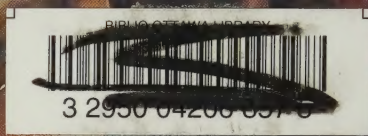
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THERE'S A RIFT IN THE FLOCK, AND EVERYONE IS CHOOSING SIDES! WHILE MAX AND HER TEAM ARE EUROPE-BOUND, FANG AND HIS CREW HEAD WEST. NO MATTER WHICH DIRECTION THE FLOCK HEADS IN, THOUGH, THERE'S TROUBLE AROUND EVERY CORNER. ITEX'S "BY-HALF PLAN" TO REDUCE THE WORLD'S POPULATION IS ALREADY IN MOTION, AND THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF LETTING ANYTHING – OR ANYONE – STAND IN THEIR WAY! CAN THESE BIRD-KIDS OF A FEATHER SURVIVE IF THEY DON'T FLOCK TOGETHER??

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